

AUTOPSY OF A DILL PICKLE

By Heather Peterson



Performed by Dr. _____, Coroner, on this day of _____.

Tools: scalpel, forceps, dissecting pan, scissors, dissecting needles, dropper, pH paper, slides, microscopes

Body Exterior:

Describe the exterior of the body. Draw both the dorsal and ventral views of your pickle and label the views. Label any markings on your drawing.

Dorsal:

Ventral:

Body Interior:

1. Turn your specimen so that its ventral side is up. Cut a "Y" incision with the arms of the Y (label A) starting at the shoulders of your specimen. The sternum area should be labeled B, abdominal area C and the pubic area should be labeled D.

a. What type of cut are you making when you cut the "Y" incision? (sagittal?, transverse?, frontal?) Explain.

b. Draw the pickle and label the areas A-D.

AUTOPSY OF A DILL PICKLE (CONTINUED)

3. After the organs are returned to their respective body cavities, and the body is sewn up, the third phase of the autopsy begins. It is a microscopic examination of tissues collected during the first two stages. Tests to analyze the chemical content of the body fluids or to determine the presence of infectious organisms may also be performed.

Examine a thin slice of pickle tissue under the microscope and draw the structure of the tissue below:

Collect a sample of body fluid using the dropper and test the pH of the body fluid using the pH paper.

pH=

Is this body fluid acidic, basic or neutral?

(Normal pH of human body tissues is 7.35-7.45)

(pH of pickle juice is around 4)

(pH is on a scale of 0-14, low is acidic)

4. Prepare you patient for burial by replacing the organs and closing the flaps. Wrap your patient in paper towel and have a brief memorial service for him or her. Dispose of the remains in the trash receptacle.

AUTOPSY OF A DILL PICKLE (CONTINUED)

Conclusions:

What is your finding about the cause of death of this patient? Support your opinion with specific details from the autopsy. (Use appropriate terminology from this unit and apply within your answer.)

Teacher Notes:

1. Take a jar of pickles, enough for one pickle per lab group. Label some A, B, C, D, E, etc. Then do something different to each group and keep track of what you did. For example, stab some in certain places, make cuts, insert objects like broken toothpicks, aluminum foil balls, tacks, etc. You can inject dye and soak some in baking soda to change the pH. I try and do a few things to each. You can do this at least a day in advance and more as long as you keep them in Ziploc baggies in the refrigerator.
2. On the day of the autopsy (and beforehand) I don't tell them what the organism is. I do this as my first dissection in my human physiology class of the semester to practice terms and dissecting techniques. I wear a lab coat and goggles as they come in, I have the "organism" under a white sheet on a lab table up front with a light shining on it. I turn off the classroom lights and play some music, like "Who Are You" from The Who (also the CSI theme song). I tell a story about a gang fight over the weekend and we have to identify what happened. I tell them it was between the gangs of the Claussens and the Vlasic. (pickle brands) A few get it but most don't. Then I say there were parts everywhere, relish all over...etc. Then I take off the sheet and show them our victims.
3. Give each group a different pickle from your groups A-F. They complete the lab using terms from body organization and anatomy. (ventral, dorsal, superficial, distal, sagittal, laceration, femoral, thoracic, cranial, etc)
4. They prepare a coroner's report and share them with the class. I tell them they can make up a story that goes with their evidence. They need to include several detailed descriptions of the body using the terms from our unit.