

TIPS, PROVERBS, AND OTHER ACCUMULATED WISDOM
Regarding Laser Capture Microdissection

***LCM is like any good experiment. Success is all in the DETAILS.**

***KNOW YOUR TISSUE! All slides are not created equal.**

***KEEP IT SIMPLE. The PixCell II is a simple machine. Don't make it hard.**

***Don't panic. If you get stuck with a question, raise your hand!**

***Drier is better** The presence of moisture or other undesired materials (unevaporated xylene, contaminated EtOH, finger prints, coverslips, frost, etc.) hinders your ability to perform a satisfactory LCM event.

***Humidity and moisture are your enemies**

***There are 3 rules for LCM:**

1. Focus the laser

The laser focus is verified by observing black, melted rings of plastic. Adjustments to the power and duration may be required. When you change slides, recheck the focus.

2. Bring a good slide

Most of the problems encountered by new users arise from not following the LCM protocols. Protocols are tools. Use the proper tool.

3. Use a good Cap

Caps are manufactured under clean room conditions and remain clean until detached from the carrier. Caps which have been fingerprinted, dropped, reused excessively, or damaged will not perform optimally.

DO NOT VIOLATE THESE RULES!
YOUR HAPPINESS DEPENDS ON THIS

***In general, if you cannot melt plastic you need to increase the power and if you cannot detach the cells you need to increase the duration.**

***The measure of success is cells in an Eppendorf not prowess at optimizing the laser. Use whichever parameters achieve cell lifting, but avoid using arbitrarily high settings.**

***Judge your LCM results by material captured on the Cap, not the appearance of the "hole" on the slide.**

***If you find over time that you are having to use ever higher power settings to achieve lifting then your slides are getting "wet". Corrective action may be needed.**

***Your slides are your investment of time and manpower. Treat them accordingly.**