

# Guide to describing gross pathology

- **Describe what you see**, don't over-interpret
- **Describe everything you notice as different**
- **Be methodical**, have a system and stick to it
- **Take photos**, they add to a good description

## Location

Organ - lobe/part  
Cranial / caudal / dorsal / ventral  
Left / right  
Distal / proximal  
External / internal  
Visceral / parietal

## Number and extent

Count if few, estimate if many  
Percentage of organ involvement  
Focal / multifocal  
Coalescing / diffuse

## Colour

Simple colours - use combinations  
eg yellow-brown  
Shades/ degrees: dark, light,  
mottled, streaked, stippled

## Size

Measurements (mm/cm), range  
Haemorrhages: petechiae (1-2mm),  
ecchymoses (2-3cm), purpura  
(extensive), paintbrush (streaked)  
Into space: haematoma  
Into body cavity: haemothorax etc

## Shape

Ovoid, circular, conical, wedge-shaped,  
fusiform  
Irregular, linear  
Flat, raised, depressed  
Ulcerated, eroded  
Pedunculated, lobular, tortuous,  
laminated, clustered

## Consistency and texture

Soft (lips), firm (nose), hard (forehead)  
Fluctuant, fluid-filled, turgid,  
gas-filled, friable, crepitant  
Fluids: viscous, mucoid, stringy,  
clear, cloudy  
Contents: dry, inspissated, caseous,  
gritty, granular, gelatinous

## Content

Volume  
Colour  
Odour  
Consistency  
Clear / cloudy / colour

## Findings may not be lesions

Could be normal, an artefact,  
PM change, parasitic,  
a lesion of no significance

