PREFACE

Cytology is the study of cells in order to identify diseases due to infection, inflammation and neoplasia. Cytology can identify many neoplasms including benign and malignant ones. These neoplasms may be primary, recurrent or metastatic, or their precursor lesions.[1] A cytologic diagnosis has many benefits and is very aptly defined by Orell (1992) [2]: "A preoperative cytologic diagnosis is advantageous for many reasons: an instant diagnosis can be provided thereby relieving anxiety of the patient, surgery can be avoided in non-neoplastic lesions or delayed for convenience in the case of a benign lesion. In addition, preoperative staging and planning of the extent of surgery is possible in a diagnosis of malignancy."

One of the constraints of the conventional FNA smear is the limited material available for adjuvant diagnostic investigations including immunocytochemistry. [3-13] The cell block technique employs the retrieval of small tissue fragments from a FNA specimen which are processed to form a paraffin block. It is widely accepted that this method of analysis increases the cellular yield and improves diagnostic accuracy.[3-13] The ability to obtain numerous tissue sections allows for multiple immunostains and other studies to be performed akin to paraffin sections produced in histopathology.[14]