

Collection of the lumbar spinal cord

Equipment required

1. A hard hat, particularly if working in an abattoir or knackery
2. Safety eye glasses, particularly if using hammers and axes
3. Strong gloves to protect against sharp bone fragments
4. Overalls
5. Rubber boots (gumboots)
6. One sharp boning knife
7. One small stone hammer
8. One $\frac{3}{4}$ size axe, preferably with fibreglass handle
9. One spatula
10. One plastic 2 litre jar with a secure screw top lid half filled with 10% buffered formalin for the lumbar spinal cord
11. Knee pads to make working in the kneeling position cleaner and more comfortable (optional)
12. A piece of carpet to serve as a good working surface for this procedure (optional).

Step-by-step instructions to collect the lumbar spinal cord

1. Using a knife, cut through two adjoining intervertebral disks in the lower lumbar region.
2. Using an axe, continue the cuts into the surrounding bone.
3. Dissect free the section of the spinal column from the skin and muscle attachments.
4. Tease out the spinal cord after breaking the nerve roots with a spatula.
5. Place the spinal cord into the jar of 10% buffered formalin to fix. **Do not freeze.**
6. Submit the spinal cord and any other specimens to the accredited laboratory in your state or territory.