How to Plate a Specimen for Urine Culture

If urine specimens are cultured on-site and referred to Allina Health Laboratory for identification and susceptibility testing, please plate the specimen as described below.

Materials: 5% Sheep Blood Agar (BA)
MacConkey Agar (MAC)
Colistin - Nalidixic Acid Blood Agar (CNA)
0.001 ml calibrated loop (disposable is acceptable)
Air incubator

Specimen:

1. Collection
   a. Clean Catch midstream specimen (voided)
   b. Catheterized specimen

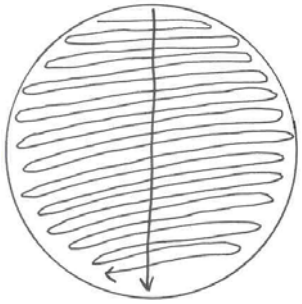
2. Handling and storage
   a. Plating of specimens for identification should be done within two (2) hours of collection.
   b. If specimen cannot be plated within two (2) hours, store in refrigerator until plated. Refrigerated urine is stable for 24 hours.

3. Specify "void", "cath", or "foley" on request.

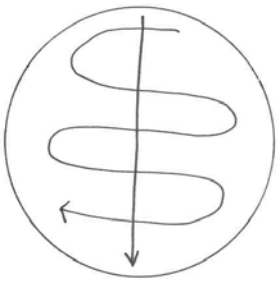
Procedure:

1. Gently swirl the urine to ensure even distribution of any organisms before culturing.
2. Select the 0.001 disposable loop (if using a non-disposable, flame and allow to cool before use.)
3. Holding the loop in a vertical position, insert the loop just below the surface of the urine. Streak the loopful of urine down the center of the agar plate. Without changing or re-flaming the loop, streak many times at right angles over the original streak, covering the entire plate. DO NOT re-streak over already streaked areas.

Correct



Incorrect



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4. Inoculate the plates as follows:

Void & Cath		Cloudy & Foley	
BA	0.001	BA	0.001
MAC	0.001	MAC	0.001
		CNA	0.001

5. Incubate the plates in a 35^0 C air incubator.

6. Place patient ID label, including full name and 2^{nd} unique identifier (ex, Date of Birth or ID#) on each plate.
   SPECIFY: Void, Cath, or Foley

7. Add a label to one of the plates indicating the number of hours the plates were incubated before transport.

8. Transport plates in a biohazard bag at **room temperature.**

Please call Allina Health Laboratory Client Services at 612-863-4678, Option 1 with any questions.