



UK National External Quality Assessment Service for Microbiology

These simulated specimens may contain virulent pathogenic organisms of any category other than hazard group 4

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MYCOLOGY DISTRIBUTION

Safety Notes

- All EQA samples may contain fully virulent organisms other than those of hazard group 4
- These samples must be handled with the same degree of care as equivalent clinical samples and by the same appropriately qualified and supervised staff
- Safeguards should be included to protect at-risk members of staff
- Local and national safety guidelines and regulations must be followed
- Containment facilities used must be those appropriate to similar clinical samples. As with clinical samples it may be necessary to transfer organisms from containment level 2 to 3 during processing once preliminary tests suggest the presence of derogated category 3 organisms
- Follow the instructions for opening (below) carefully
- Inspect packages for evidence of breakage and leakage and discard by autoclaving if this is evident
- In the event of an accident involving exposure of staff contact UK NEQAS (++ 44 (0) 20 8905 9890) in normal working hours or the Colindale Duty Safety Officer (++ 44 (0) 870 084 2000) out of hours and the identity of the pathogens will be revealed

Notice for UK participants

A microorganism distributed as part of this EQA service is now included in the Schedule 5 list of controlled substances. Please be aware that storage of any organisms included in the Schedule 5 list following identification requires registration of your facility with the Home Office. For further information see:

<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si20070929.htm>

1. The vials containing freeze-dried material should be opened in an exhaust protective cabinet. Gloves should be worn during reconstitution and subsequent handling of the vials. For safe removal of the plastic tear-off seals, please proceed as follows:-

With the arrow on the plastic flip top pointing away from you, carefully but deliberately pull the flip top up and away from you. When it reaches the far edge, pull downwards and to the right or to the left (depending on whether you are right or left-handed) until the seal separates; then still holding onto the plastic top, gently remove altogether and dispose into a sharps container.

Slowly remove the plug. Add 1ml of broth to the vial and allow 1 minute to reconstitute. Treat the resulting suspension as the simulated specimen **using a drop from a Pasteur pipette or dipped swab as the inoculum** before spreading.

The Sarstedt tube/s contain fungal spores suspended in water. Using a Pasteur pipette place one drop into each of four quadrants on the plate media you selected for cultivation.

2. PLEASE CHECK THAT THE LABORATORY IDENTIFICATION NUMBER IN THE TOP RIGHT HAND CORNER OF THE FORMS IS CORRECT. Failure to do this may result in your laboratory being credited with results from another laboratory. If the number is not correct please notify the Organiser immediately.
3. Laboratories will achieve the maximum educational benefit from these specimens if they are treated as nearly as possible as normal patient specimens without non-routine procedures or media being used. Pathogens, if isolated, should be identified only to the level normally attempted in your laboratory.
4. If you are unable to examine a specimen state your reasons on the form in the space marked "Your report" and return the form but not the specimen. Laboratories not returning the forms will be given a score of zero for that specimen.
5. Please return your results as soon as possible and at the latest by the return date shown on the reply form. Return results via the website: www.ukneqasmicro.org.uk or by fax ++ 44 (0)20 8205 1488