
Lab Dept: Microbiology

Test Name: Rectal Swab for GROUP A STREP CULTURE

General Information

Lab Order Codes: RGAS

Synonyms: Culture, for Group A Strep Only; Strep Culture; Beta Strep Culture; Culture, Strep A; Streptococcus Group A Culture

CPT Codes: 87081 – Culture, presumptive, pathogenic organisms, screening only

The following testing may be added if appropriate based on findings for organism identification (multiple additions are possible if more than one organism is identified).

87077 – Aerobic isolate, additional methods required for definitive identification, each isolate (if appropriate)

Test Includes: Culture for beta-hemolytic Streptococci group A only, from rectal swabs.

Logistics

Lab Testing Sections: Microbiology

Phone Numbers: MIN Lab: 612-813-5866

STP Lab: 651-220-6555

Test Availability: Daily, 24 hours

Turnaround Time: Results are reported within 1 – 2 days.

Special Instructions: **Specimen site** and **date/time of collection** are required for specimen processing.

Specimen

Specimen Type: Rectal swab

Container: Swab transport medium - White top, Liquid Stuart (CHC #359)



Collection: **Rectal swab:**

1. Insert swab approximately 1 into anal canal.
2. Gently move the swab from side to side to sample the anal crypts.
3. If fecal contamination occurs, discard swab and use another to obtain specimen.
4. Place swab in transport medium.

Storage/Transport: Transport to the Microbiology Laboratory immediately at room temperature.

Sample Rejection: Specimen with a transit time exceeding 24 hours after collection; specimen not submitted in appropriate transport container; improperly labeled specimen, specimens collected from sources other than rectal swab. If an unacceptable specimen is received, the physician or nursing station will be notified and another specimen will be requested before the specimen is discarded.

Interpretive

Reference Range: No beta-hemolytic streptococci, group A isolated.

Methodology: Culture

Additional Information: *Streptococcus pyogenes* (group A beta-hemolytic strep) is generally susceptible to penicillin and its derivatives, therefore, susceptibility need not be routinely performed. The principal reason for considering an alternative drug for individual patients is allergy to penicillin. Erythromycin, a cephalosporin, or clindamycin might be substituted in these cases. Patients allergic to penicillins may also be allergic to cephalosporins.

Any amount of group A streptococci will be reported.

The presence of Group B streptococci will NOT be reported.

References: Cook, JH, and M Pezzlo (1992). Specimen receipt and accessioning. Section 1. Aerobic bacteriology, 1.2.1-4. In HD Isenberg (ed) Clinical Microbiology Procedures Handbook. American Society for Microbiology, Washington DC

Miller, J Michael (1999) A Guide To Specimen Management in Clinical Microbiology, American Society for Microbiology, Washington DC

Miller, J Michael, and HT Holmes (1999) Specimen Collection, Transport, and Storage In PR Murray et al, (ed), Manual of Clinical Microbiology, 7th edition, American Society for Microbiology, Washington DC, pp 33-104

Updates:

3/24/2010: CPT Updates

10/11/2010: Test name updated, previously listed as Throat Culture, Group A Streptococci Only. Listing now includes information for throat, stool and vaginal sources.

9/24/2014: Removal of specimen source: Throat, use Group A strep DNA by PCR for this specimen type. Other references to throat removed.

10/1/2024: Removal of specimen source: vagina, use [Genital Culture](#) for this specimen type.