**Lab Dept:** Microbiology  
**Test Name:** STREP GROUP A CULTURE

### General Information

**Lab Order Codes:**  
TCS

**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. If other organisms are suspected, refer to [Throat Culture, Routine](#).

### 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; Vaginal swab

**Container:** Swab transport medium
**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.

**Vagina:**

1. Wipe away excessive amount of secretion or discharge.
2. Obtain secretions from mucosal membrane of the vaginal vault with a sterile swab.
3. If smear is also requested, collect on a separate swab.
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. 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:**


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.