



Lower Respiratory Culture with Gram Stain Information Sheet

Overview

MDL Test Name

Lower Respiratory Culture with Gram Stain

MDL Test Code

LR_CULT

Ask at Order Questions

N/A

Specimen Source

Lower Respiratory Sources:

- x Sputum
- x Tracheal Aspirate
- x Bronchial Wash
- x Bronchial Alveolar Lavage (BAL)
- x Biopsy

NOTE: indicate site with bronchial specimens i.e.: RUL, etc.

Specimen Requirements

Container/Tube

- x Sterile Container – Washing/Lavage/Sputum/Aspirate
- x Sterile Saline Tube –

0.5 mL or ~ 5 mm diameter (if solid/semisolid)

Sample Stability Time

48 hours



Created: 7/29/2024
Updated: 8/15/2024

Transport/Storage Conditions

Refrigerated (2 – 8°C)



- Normal respiratory flora includes:
 - f* Viridans Streptococci
 - f* Non-pathogenic Neisseria
 - f* Diphtheroids
 - f* Coagulase-negative Staphylococcus
 - f* Rothia
 - f* Group F Streptococcus
 - f* Anaerobes
 - f* Haemophilus species (not influenzae)
 - f* Eikenella
 - f* Actinobacillus
 - f* Capnocytophaga
 - f* Moraxella
 - f* Enterococci
 - f* Yeasts (not cryptococcus)
 - f* Insignificant numbers of *S. aureus*, gram-negative rods, and *N. meningitidis*

Cautions

- x Lower respiratory samples are not routinely tested for anaerobic isolates.
- x Poor quality of sputum specimens is documented in gram stain by the presence of >10 squamous epithelial cells per low power field.
- x A negative bacterial culture does not rule out lower respiratory infection. The primary pathogen is frequently not recovered from patients with pneumoniae due to antimicrobial therapy or because the infection is caused by another type of organism (i.e.: virus, parasite, fungus, mycoplasma, or mycobacterium) that will not be recovered by routine bacterial culture.