

THROAT CULTURES

PURPOSE This procedure describes a defined manner for reading, evaluating, interpreting, and reporting cultures, ensures consistency and accuracy in culture work-up. It is to be used in the event that a rapid test is unable to be performed or is negative.

SCOPE This procedure is to be used with the M403 Microbiology Augmentation Set.

PROCEDURE

STEP	ACTION
1	Swabs for Group A Strep should be put streaked on a SBA plate and then processed by the Rapid Strep A Kit (see separate procedure). Plates are incubated overnight in CO ₂ at 35°C.
2	Aerobic organisms commonly isolated from the throat which are considered to be normal flora include : alpha and non-hemolytic strep, non-pathogenic <u>Neisseria sp.</u> , <u>Corynebacterium sp.</u> , coagulase negative staph, and <u>Micrococcus sp.</u>
3	Plates are screened for the presence of beta hemolytic streptococci. Any quantity of beta strep is worked up to identify or rule out Group A strep. (a) A catalase test should be performed on all beta hemolytic isolates. (b) Group A strep may be identified after overnight incubation using the BBL Streptocard Enzyme Latex Test Kit. Any beta hemolytic strep colonies growing on SBA that are well isolated can be tested. Throat isolates should be tested with the Group A latex reagent only. (c) If beta hemolytic colonies are not isolated well enough for testing, pick representative colonies for subculture to a BAP and incubate overnight in CO ₂ at 35°C. (d) If colonies are too small to test, reincubate until later in the day and try the test following further incubation, or reincubate until the following day.

RESULTS

STEP	ACTION
1	If Rapid Strep test is positive report "Positive for Group A Strep by Rapid Group A Strep Kit." The plate can be discarded.
2	If the Rapid Strep test is negative and no beta strep is present at 24 hours, report: "No beta hemolytic strep isolated."
3	If Group A strep is isolated and identified by growth on SSA, Strep latex kit, and a negative catalase test, report the quantity present and ID: e.g. 3+ Beta Hemolytic Strep, Lancefield Group A
4	If beta strep is isolated which is not Group A strep by Streptex, the report should indicate the quantity present and the description: e.g.. 3+ Beta Hemolytic Strep, Not Group A.
5	If significant organisms other than beta strep are isolated, consult with the OIC or NCOIC.
6	Reports of cultures that are less than 24 hours old with no growth and reports of cultures that are less than 24 hours old whose growth cannot be accurately evaluated require further incubation.

REFERENCES

Reference: Howard, Barbara J. Clinical and Pathogenic Microbiology Washington, D.C.; C.V. Mosby Co., 1994. pp.261, 264-266.