



November, 2006

## Acceptance Criteria for Anaerobic Cultures

### Specimen Rejection Criteria:

- Mislabeled or unlabelled specimens. A report will be sent stating “Specimen received unlabelled” or “Requisition identification does not match the specimen identification information. Please resubmit”.
- Isolates not submitted in appropriate anaerobic transport system at room temperature.
- The submitting laboratory will be contacted regarding isolates or specimens from critical sites (e.g. brain abscess) that are submitted inappropriately (e.g. improper transport conditions or mislabelled/unlabelled).

### Transportation:

Anaerobic cultures submitted for identification and/or susceptibility testing must be transported at room temperature in a transport system that has been validated for transport of anaerobes.

### Clinical Information:

Relevant clinical and primary laboratory test information must be provided as noted on the Reference Bacteriology Requisition.

For example:

- specimen source (e.g. brain abscess)
- antibiotic treatment
- Gram stain description, aerotolerance test results and catalase reaction
- if isolate is part of a polymicrobial infection
- the number of consecutive blood cultures positive for the submitted isolate where isolates are from blood cultures

### Specimen type and preliminary identification:

- Pure culture of a single isolate is required.
- Clinical specimens for primary isolation will not be accepted except under unusual circumstances. A blood culture bottle (from the primary blood culture set-up) may be submitted if the submitting laboratory is unable to isolate the organism but the direct Gram stain smear shows presence of bacteria. The Reference Identification and Susceptibility section (see contact information below) must be advised prior to submission of primary specimens.
- Please do not submit multiple isolates from the same specimen/site of infection - for polymicrobial infections, only submit the two most predominant isolates.
- Laboratories should perform preliminary identification tests including catalase (15% hydrogen peroxide) and Gram stain. Note growth characteristics on all isolates on the request form.

## Acceptance Criteria for Anaerobic Cultures (continued)

### Identification

#### **Lactobacillus spp.:**

- Speciation and/or susceptibility testing will be attempted for *Lactobacillus* spp. isolated from systemic infections only (e.g. blood, pleural fluid etc).
- *Lactobacillus* spp. from urine cultures will not be processed.

#### **Propionibacterium acnes:**

- Pleomorphic Gram positive bacilli that are catalase-positive and spot indole-positive are reported as *P. acnes*. These do not require further testing at OPHL.
- Indole or catalase negative strains may be forwarded to the OPHL for confirmation.

### Susceptibility Testing:

- Susceptibility testing will only be performed on isolates from sterile sites (excluding urines).
- For treatment failure cases, please include the clinical information and antimicrobial therapy.
- Requests for susceptibility testing may require consultation with the Medical Microbiologist.

### For Further Information:

- Identification and Susceptibility Laboratory in Toronto at 416-235-5706 / 5988
- Your local Public Health Laboratory
- OPHL HELPLINE at 1-800-640-7221
- Ministry website at [www.health.gov.on.ca](http://www.health.gov.on.ca)