

New York State Dept of Health Bacteriology Proficiency Testing Program Instruction Sheet – Gram Stains

SEPTEMBER 8, 2009

The Gram stain category is applicable to laboratories that prepare and examine gram-stained smears for the presence of bacteria. There are 3 proficiency tests annually in this category. A minimum score of 80% is required to pass each test event. Failure to achieve a score of 80% on two of three consecutive testing events is considered unsuccessful performance.

If there is any problem with the specimens, you **MUST** inform our office **within 5 business days** of the shipment date by calling (518) 474-4177.

Instructions

- This test event consists of five slides. Each slide contains 3 sample areas. The circle closest to the labeled end of the slide contains the proficiency test sample. The two remaining circles are empty and are available for quality control use. A Gram-positive control (i.e. *Staphylococcus aureus*) and a Gram-negative control (i.e. *Escherichia coli*) can be placed in each of these circles. **The use of the two empty circles for quality control is left to the sole discretion of each laboratory and is not part of the testing event.**
- Stain the proficiency test slides according to your laboratory's Gram stain procedure.
- Examine the stained proficiency sample under the microscope at 100X magnification (oil immersion).
- Report the Gram stain characteristics and morphology of the microorganism(s) detected.

Submission of results

The deadline for submission of results is **SEPTEMBER 21, 2009**. **Results must be submitted electronically unless prior approval has been obtained from the Clinical Laboratory Evaluation Program.**

- **Electronic reporting: Do not submit paper results.** Specific questions regarding electronic reporting should be addressed to the Clinical Laboratory Evaluation Program at **(518) 485-5378** or by emailing **clepeptrs@health.state.ny.us**

If you have any questions regarding the Bacteriology Proficiency Testing Program, please contact Mrs. Geetha Nattanmai at **(518) 474-4177**.

Enclosure