

Swab Method Procedures for Easygel®

Introduction

There are two swabbing methods with Easygel. The first is to use the Easygel to moisten a swab and then swab a surface. The second is to pour the bottle of Easygel into the dish, allow it to solidify, and then swab a surface and streak the swab across the surface of the solidified dish. The first method is better for inexperienced persons.

Method 1 (Liquid moisten, swab and pour)

- 1) Remove a swab from sterile package. Do not touch swab tip or touch it against anything.
- 2) Moisten the swab if necessary using either the **Easygel** liquid, sterile water, or sterile buffer. Wring excess liquid against inside of bottle. (Step 2 is optional)
- 3) Swab the surface(s) you wish to monitor, rotating as you swab. It is recommended that you test a surface by swabbing 2 square inches.
- 4) After swabbing, immerse the swab in the **Easygel** and twirl back and forth while pressing against the inside of the bottle. Break or cut the swab end (above the tip) into the bottle of **Easygel**. Swirl the bottle to mix.
- 5) Open a pretreated petri dish and pour the contents of the bottle (minus the swab) into the dish. Replace the lid and gently swirl to cover the bottom.
- 6) Allow 45 minutes to solidify. After the liquid is solidified you may want to tape the lid on, and then incubate. Incubate either in an incubator or in a warm place. **DO NOT** place in direct sunlight or over a direct heat source, radiator, furnace duct etc. You may place dishes near one of these sources or in a warm spot in the kitchen. Allow 24-48 hours for growth to begin. Once growth begins you can incubate another 24 hours for complete growth to take place.
- 7) After 72 hours, read and record the results.

To calculate: # of colonies ÷ # of square inches = # of colonies per square inch

Example: 180 colonies ÷ 2 square inches = 90 colonies per square inch

Method 2 (Pour, solidify and swab)

(Prepare dishes one or more days in advance to save preparation time and give a better quality surface.)

- 1) Remove petri dishes from their sleeve and lay them on a level surface with the lid side up.
- 2) Remove the cap of an Easygel bottle. Do not touch the rim or inside of bottle, or petri dish.
- 3) Pour the liquid Easygel into the dish bottom. Replace the lid. Gently swirl to cover the bottom.
- 4) Allow 45 minutes for the Easygel to solidify. You may now inoculate the dish. Use a wax pencil or magic marker to label the dish.
- 5) Swab the surface(s) you wish to monitor, rotating as you swab. It is recommended that you test a surface by swabbing 2 square inches.
- 6) Gently streak the swab across the surface of the gel in a long zig-zag pattern back and forth. Replace the lid and incubate. (You may want to tape the lid down.) Incubate either in an incubator or in a warm place. **DO NOT** place in direct sunlight or over a direct heat source, radiator, furnace duct etc. You may place dishes near one of these sources or in a warm spot in the kitchen. Allow 24-48 hours for growth to begin. Once growth begins you can incubate another 24 hours for complete growth to take place.
- 7) After 72 hours, read and record the results.

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