

WIPE, Test Code 1122-MRSA Culture & Total Bacterial Culture w/ ID

Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* is a multi drug resistant bacterium that is normally associated with hospitals and healthcare facilities. Now it can be found in classrooms, locker rooms and athletic facilities like wrestling rooms. The MRSA found in hospitals is referred as HA-MRSA or hospital associated MRSA. People who haven't been to a hospital or healthcare facility in two years and contract MRSA have a strain called CA-MRSA, community associated MRSA. The reason why this bacterium is so devastating is once it enters the body thru a cut it can move from organ to organ with ease. Staph. aureus is spread thru bodily fluids and skin to skin contact. The bacterium likes to grow on surfaces and fabrics like gowns and curtains.

Sampling for MRSA can be done with a swab and sent to the lab for a culture. The swabs contents are then plated on a selective media known as Mannitol Salt Agar. If a Staph. aureus species is isolated the disk diffusion method is then used to determine if the organism is a methicillin resistant strain of Staph. aureus.

1. Wear gloves while sampling surfaces.
2. Collect the sample using a sterile swab system and rub vigorously over the surface that is being sampled. Indicate on the chain of custody the surface area sampled in either in² or cm².
3. Once the sample is collected the swab needs to be placed in a cooler with an ice pack to protect the sample from extreme temperatures.
4. The sample then needs to be shipped to the lab within 24 hours of sample collection.

References:

Dillon, H. Kenneth, L. Hung, J. Miller, Field Guide for the Determination of Biological Contaminants in Environmental Samples., 5.2.6.6:61, 7.1: 141-143 (2005).

Macher, Janet, Sc.D., M.P.H., Bioaerosols , 7.4.1.2, 18.1.4.2 (1999).

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/mrsa/>, Centers for Disease Control, (2007).