



Friday, May 16, 2014

Possible *Listeria* Contamination of Blood Agar Plates #1

Target audience: Clinical laboratories

Background:

- During the past week, CDC was notified by epidemiologists in two states of apparent isolations of *Listeria* from specimen sources that are unusual for *Listeria*, such as urine, wound, and abscess. A clinical laboratory reported *Listeria* growth on un-inoculated plates and growth away from the streak line on inoculated plates, raising the question of whether the plates were contaminated before inoculation.
- At this time, we are investigating whether these isolates of *Listeria* are linked to contaminated culture plates. We ask that laboratory staff notify MDCH Bureau of Laboratories of any instances of *Listeria* apparently isolated from atypical sources (e.g., urine or wound) in patients without symptoms of listeriosis. Any laboratory that suspects that they have received contaminated culture plates should also contact the manufacturer.

Steps for laboratories to take now:

- All clinical laboratories should check plated agar media for contamination, particularly agar plates with 5% sheep blood.
- Please send all *Listeria* isolates in pure culture on an agar slant to the MDCH laboratory for molecular characterization to determine if the *Listeria* isolate is associated with an outbreak or other unusual incident such as this current developing situation.
- Please remember to include a completed MDCH test requisition form with patient name and source of specimen as usual. Please indicate on the test requisition in Section 5: the agar plate manufacturer, plate type (TSA sheep blood, Columbia sheep blood, etc.), product number, lot number, expiration date, and time stamp on plate. The current MDCH Microbiology/Virology test requisition is available at:

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/DCH-0583TEST_REQUEST_7587_7.pdf

- Please note: this is a two-page form. Both sides must be completed. For test requested, mark either “for surveillance” (patient isolates) or write in “Suspect Media Contamination.”
- Notify the manufacturer if you discover any contaminated plates.
- Listeriosis is a reportable disease. Laboratories must send any *Listeria monocytogenes* isolates to the MDCH laboratory. The up-to-date Reportable Disease list is available at:

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/Reportable_Disease_Chart_2005_122678_7.pdf

Questions and additional information:

For laboratory related questions, please contact:

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(517) 335-8063 (during normal business hours)

Thank you for your assistance in this investigation.