

Training Bulletin

ThinPrep® Specimen Collection



This bulletin is part of a series of Hologic™ customer training bulletins designed as a continuation of Hologic's in-house customer training program.

ThinPrep Collection Techniques

The detection of cervical cancer and its precursors as well as other gynecologic abnormalities is the primary purpose of obtaining a cervical cell sample. The following guidelines are referenced from CLSI Document GP15-A3¹ and are recommended in the collection process for obtaining a ThinPrep Pap test (TPPT) specimen. In general, the guidelines state that it is important to obtain a specimen that is not obscured by blood, mucus, inflammatory exudate or lubricant.

Patient Information

The patient should be tested 2 weeks after the first day of her last menstrual period, and definitely not when she is menstruating.

- Even though the TPPT reduces obscuring blood, clinical studies have demonstrated that excessive amounts of blood may still compromise the test and possibly lead to an unsatisfactory result.²

The patient should not use vaginal medication, vaginal contraceptives, personal lubricants or douches during the 48 hours before the exam.

Specimen Collection Preparation

If desired, use lukewarm water to warm and lubricate the speculum. Water-soluble gel lubricant sparingly applied to the posterior blade of the speculum can be used if necessary.

- Even though lubricant jellies are water soluble, excessive amounts of jelly may compromise the test and possibly lead to an unsatisfactory result.

Remove excess mucus or other discharge present before taking the sample. If there is excess mucus or other discharge present, remove it gently with a cotton swab.

- Excess cervical mucus, inflammatory exudates and blood is essentially devoid of meaningful cellular material and when present in the sample vial may yield a slide with little or no diagnostic material present.

The cervix should not be cleaned by washing with saline or it may result in a relatively acellular specimen.

The sample should be obtained before the application of acetic acid.

Specimen Collection

Refer to Hologic's ThinPrep Pap test Quick Reference Guide, MAN-01704-001

Collection Device Rinsing

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