

AFB Referred Culture (Mycobacteria for ID)

Revised 9/25/2023

Test description	Identification of mycobacteria to the species, complex or group.
Test use	To identify mycobacteria isolated in culture.
Test Department	Mycobacteriology Laboratory Phone: (860) 920-6649, FAX (860) 920-6721
Methodology	Identification methods: Real Time PCR and MALDI-TOF Mass Spectroscopy (MS).
Availability	Isolate identification is generally available within 10-21 days of confirmation of acid-fast bacilli in culture. Culture growth rates and viability may impact identification turnaround time.
Specimen Requirements	Acid fast organism on solid or in liquid media commonly used for the isolation of mycobacteria species such as Lowenstein-Jensen and Middlebrook agar and media from automated test systems (e.g. BACTEC™ MGIT™ broth).
Collection Kit/Container	Follow all applicable federal regulations for packaging of infectious substances.
Collection Instructions	Submit culture in routine agar or broth media
Specimen Handling & Transport	Transport to the laboratory at room temperature (15 -25°C). Avoid temperature extremes. Cultures suspected of containing <i>Mycobacterium tuberculosis</i> should be packaged and shipped in accordance with “Category A Infectious Substances” guidelines.
Unacceptable Conditions	Unlabeled specimens. Cultures that have leaked or containers that have broken in transit. Cultures overgrown with or contaminated by non-acid fast bacteria.
Requisition Form	Clinical Test Requisition OL-9B (select AFB Referred Culture)
Required Information	Name and address of submitter. Two patient identifiers (ie. name, DOB, Acc.#, MRN), Town of residence (city, state, zip), specimen type or site of collection, date collected, and test requested. Please ensure information on the requisition matches that on the specimen. Include prior AFB testing results, if available.
Limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-acid fast organisms present in the culture may interfere with identification of mycobacteria. • Real Time PCR identification test does not differentiate between members of the tuberculosis complex (<i>Mycobacterium tuberculosis</i>, <i>M. africanum</i>, <i>M. bovis</i>, <i>M. canettii</i>, <i>M. microti</i>, <i>M. caprae</i>, and <i>M. pinnipedii</i>), nor between members of the avium complex (<i>Mycobacterium chimera</i>, <i>M. intracellulare</i>, <i>M. avium</i> and others)
Additional comments	In most cases, isolates will only be identified to the species level or to the “species-complex group” (such as <i>M. avium</i> complex or <i>M. tuberculosis</i> complex). Isolates can be submitted to collaborating laboratories for additional testing. Call the Mycobacteriology Laboratory for further information.