



Training Bulletin

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

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 NCCLS Document GP15-A¹ 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 result².
- **The patient should not use vaginal medication, vaginal contraceptives, or douches during the 48 hours before the exam.**

Specimen Collection Preparation

- **Lubricant jellies should not be used to lubricate the speculum.**
Even though lubricant jellies are water soluble, excessive amounts of jelly may compromise the test and possibly lead to an unsatisfactory result. If lubricant is necessary due to patient discomfort or use of a plastic speculum, it should be applied to the speculum directly using as little as needed to create a thin film on the speculum's surface avoiding the tip. Lubricant on the cervix may interfere with obtaining a representative cervical sample or cause artifact in the alcohol based transport medium.
- **Remove excess mucus or other discharge present before taking the sample. This should be gently removed with ring forceps holding a folded gauze pad.**
The excess cervical mucus 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.
- **Remove inflammatory exudate from the cervical canal before taking the sample. Remove by placing a dry 2 x 2 inch piece of gauze over the cervix and peeling it away after it absorbs the exudate or by using a dry proctoswab or scopette.**
The excess inflammatory exudate is essentially devoid of diagnostic 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 CYTYC Corporation's ThinPrep Pap Test Quick Reference Guide, Part No. 85217-001 Rev. G³

Collection Device Rinsing

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¹ Papanicolaou Technique Approved Guidelines (NCCLS Document GP15-A)

² Lee et al. Comparison of Conventional Papanicolaou Smears and a Fluid-Based, Thin-Layer System for Cervical Cancer Screening. *Ob Gyn* 1997; 90: 278-284.

³ ThinPrep Pap Test Quick Reference Guide, Part No. 85217-001 Rev. G