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Preparing Surface Collection Samples

R-CARD™ Reference Guide

Samples that have been collected from solid surfaces can be tested with R-CARD™ products after proper preparation. Sample areas such as a countertop, food processing equipment, or a working space can be swabbed to collect microbes.

Method 1: Swab Sample onto R-CARD™

Supplies Needed: R-CARD™ test card, sterile swab, sterile dropper or syringe, sterile diluent

1. Wet sterile swab with sterile diluent (IE. 0.1% peptone or deionized water)
2. Swab surface area to collect sample
3. Set sample aside
4. Lift plastic film on R-CARD™ and dispense 1 mL of sterile diluent on center of card
5. Place swab in puddle of diluent on the card and mix, gentling twirling swab to deposit material
6. Remove the swab from diluent and press it beside puddle to leave any extra material
7. Let plastic film fall over the sample and dispose of swab
8. Sample will naturally spread in a circular fashion and gel within 1-2 minutes

Method 2: Dispense Sample onto R-CARD™

Supplies Needed: R-CARD™ test card, sterile swab, sterile dropper or syringe, sterile diluent

1. Dispense 10 mL of Peptone Water diluent in a tube or bottle (0.1% peptone is required)
2. Dip sterile swab in diluent to wet
3. Swab surface area to collect sample
4. Place swab in diluent and mix by twisting against the inside wall to deposit material. Sample has been prepared.
5. Dispose of swab
6. Lift plastic film on R-CARD™ and dispense 1 mL of sample on center of card
7. Let plastic film fall overtop the sample
8. Sample will naturally spread in a circular fashion and gel within 1-2 minutes

Next place R-CARD™ test card(s) into an incubator at the desired temperature for incubation until the growth of colonies can be easily counted. Depending on the R-CARD™ product, this will take 24-48 hours.

If the number of colonies present on the test are too numerous to count (TNTC), we recommend diluting the liquid sample to a dilution that yields approximately 20-150 colonies for ease of accurately counting the colonies. For more detailed information on dilutions, reference our dilution guide, Understanding Dilution: A Guide for Working with Dilutions, on our website.