

THE HYGIENE SLIDE WITH THE UNIQUE HINGE

For monitoring microbial contamination
on surfaces or in liquids

INTENDED USE

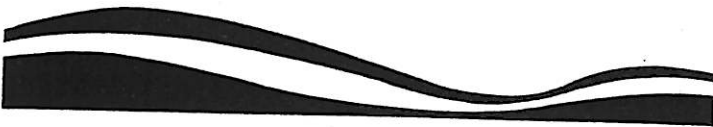
HYCHECK is a Hygiene Contact Slide used to assess the microbiological contamination of surfaces or fluids.

PRINCIPLE OF THE METHOD

Both sides of the double sided Hygiene Contact Slide are pressed firmly onto the test surface, or dipped into the fluid under investigation. The unique hinge mechanism in the plastic paddle of HYCHECK specifically enables surfaces to be sampled easily.

A proportion of any microorganisms contaminating the area under test will be transferred to the agar and will grow into visible colonies on incubation. The number and nature of the colonies gives an excellent indication of the microbial load of the material under test.

The agar contact method has been shown to give good correlation with swabbing techniques, especially where low level contamination is present.



METHOD OF USE: GENERAL

1 REMOVE SLIDE

Loosen cap on the tube and remove the HYCHECK Slide from the container taking care not to touch the agar surface. Examine for any dehydration or contamination.

2 SAMPLING

(a) SURFACES.

Hold the terminal spike against the surface to be tested. Press down on the spike to bend the paddle around the hinge line. Gently lower the slide and press the agar into contact with the test surface, still holding the slide by the cap.

Apply a firm and even pressure on the test surface for a few seconds taking care not to smear the agar over the test area.

Repeat the procedure using the second agar surface on an area adjacent to the initial test site. Replace slide in the container and close tightly.

(b) LIQUIDS.

Immerse the HYCHECK Slide into the test fluid so that the agar surface becomes totally covered. If insufficient liquid is available, pour over the surface of the slide. Allow to drain. Replace the slide in the container and close tightly.

3 LABEL

Enter the site, location, date and time. Also indicate whether the sample has been taken before or after cleaning.

4 INCUBATION

Incubate in an upright position at the temperature indicated in the instructions for the particular product. However, alternative times and temperatures for incubation may be used according to individual requirements.

5 READING RESULTS

Remove slide from the tube and count the number of colonies on each agar surface. Reflected light facilitates reading.

INTRODUCTION

Monitoring the microbial flora of environmental surfaces, manufacturing plant and equipment is an important stage in achieving a Good Manufacturing Procedure in factories handling foods, cosmetics or pharmaceuticals^{1,2}

To maintain good hygiene standards in hotels and restaurant kitchens, microbiological contamination must also be monitored³.

Methods to monitor the environmental flora have been described using either a swabbing technique⁴ or contact plates⁵, but each has separate limitations.

The Hygiene Contact Slide has been developed with features designed to overcome the limitations of these two methods.

FEATURES

The slide paddle is hinged, which allows the entire agar surface to be easily placed against each test area during sampling.

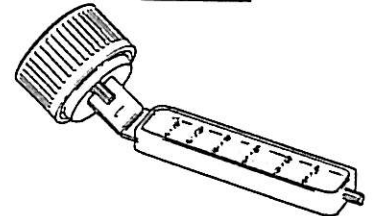
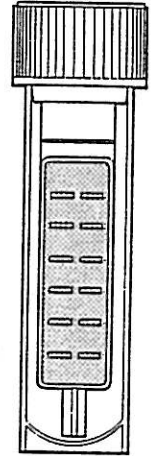
The slide is permanently attached to the cap for ease of handling during sampling.

The double-sided slide is plastic and provides raised edges to ensure an even thickness of agar medium.

Six different media combinations are currently available.

The surface area of the paddle is clearly divided into units of 1 square centimetre to allow direct counting of microbial density/unit area.

After incubation the pattern of microbial contamination can be seen on the agar surface and the location of bacteria lodging in cracks or scratches readily identified.



INTERPRETATION

The microorganism counts obtained with HYCHECK are a semi-quantitative guide to the degree of contamination in the environment being tested.

Monitoring with HYCHECK over a period of time gives a good guide as to how the microbial load is changing at a given site.

For ease of interpretation the number of colonies can be scored as below:

Total colonies on one side (7cm ²)	Score	Classification
0	-	No growth
1 - 9	+/-	Slight Contamination
10 - 20	+	Moderate Contamination
20 - 100	++	Heavy Contamination
100 + confluent	+++	Very Heavy Contamination

An illustrated interpretation guide for surfaces and liquids is available upon request.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

A/ CLEAN HANDS / DO NOT TOUCH PADDLE

The Pantech test slide has been manufactured under sterile conditions with strict quality control at every stage. It is important that careful attention be paid to handling procedures to ensure accurate results.

B/ STORE BELOW 30°C / DO NOT FREEZE

The easy to use Pantech VA Hygiene Check Slide is quite robust but it is suggested that when temperatures are high, e.g. car transport, that they be stored in a chilly bin to avoid overheating. It is also possible that the agar may be knocked out of place. This has only ever occurred with excessively rough handling, so it is important to handle with care.

FOR SURFACE TESTING

1/ Identify correct agar - check colour - check label.
This information should be included on report form.

2/ Check expiry date on box.

At Sample Site

3/ Mark ID label. NB Paddles are stamped 1&2.

4/ Carefully unscrew lid - do not touch internal components.

5/ Place paddle extension (small knob) on surface to be tested.

6/ Keeping lid in the same position in the hand, apply pressure to bend paddle to allow paddle edge to rest on test surface, so that the agar pad is at a 45° angle.

7/ Rock paddle gently from edge to edge, so that the total agar surface contacts the test site four times.

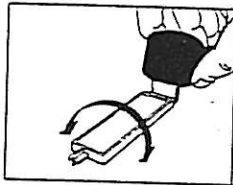
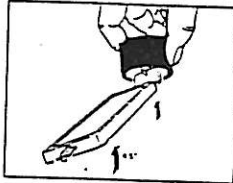
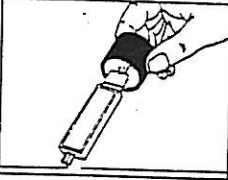
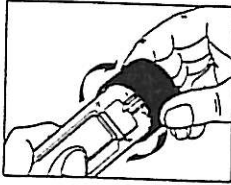
Do not use too much pressure.

Don't touch internal components.

8/ Repeat procedure on the next site with second side of paddle. If necessary, replace paddle carefully in the tube for transport between sites.

9/ Check correct identification is filled out on report form.

10/ Replace paddle in tube, close tightly, store upright and return to laboratory.



FOR FLUID TESTING

1/ - 4/ as per surface testing.

5/ Either immerse the paddle in test fluid, or if the fluid quantity is insufficient for total immersion, pour over the surface of the slide.

6/ DRAIN. Allow excess fluid to drain from the slide.

7/ Replace paddle into container and close tightly.

N.B. The Pantech V.A. Hygiene Check Slide is completely non-toxic and non-tainting. If it is not possible or desirable to draw a sample off a larger quantity of fluid, testing may be carried out on the bulk product.

8/ Check I.D.

LAB INSTRUCTIONS

Incubation: Incubate vertically min. 24 hours for bacteria at 30-37°C, yeasts & moulds 4-5 days at 30°C. Variations to these recommendations may be necessary for specific applications.

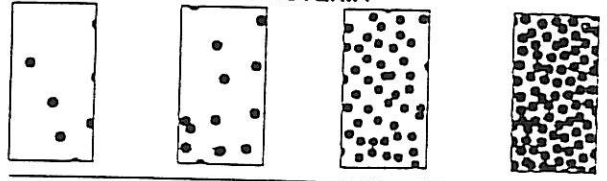
Disposal: Autoclave or disinfection.

The Pantech V.A. Hygiene check slides are presented in a robust clear perspex organiser. This unique feature makes transport convenient and safe. enables extra labelling at labs and spot checks are simple to do during incubation.

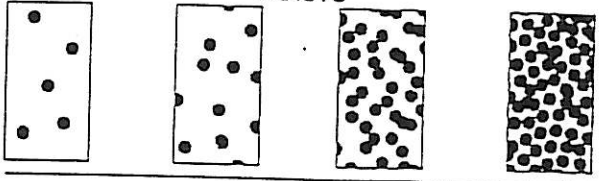


INTERPRETATION (SURFACES)

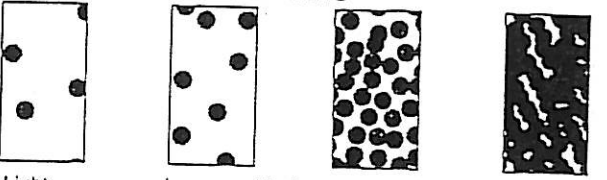
BACTERIA



YEASTS



MOULDS



Light

Moderate

Heavy

Example

Interpretation

Grade	Count
A	= 0
B	= 1-20
C	= 21-70
D	= >70

Colonies on slide

" "

" "

" "

A and B results are classified as acceptable, C and D as unacceptable.

Individual results should be expressed as A, B, C or D and monitored over time for a swab site. More stringent criteria where laboratory conditions exist or strict Hygiene control, ie food processing. Because interpretations are relative, each laboratory should establish its own values for what constitutes a clean area.

