Charcoal Blood Agar Base  

**Composition**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredients</th>
<th>Gms / Litre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peptone</td>
<td>10.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HM peptone B#</td>
<td>10.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starch, soluble</td>
<td>10.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sodium chloride</td>
<td>5.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charcoal</td>
<td>4.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yeast extract</td>
<td>3.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agar</td>
<td>12.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Final pH (at 25°C)</strong></td>
<td>7.5±0.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Directions**

Suspend 54.5 grams in 900 ml purified / distilled water. Heat to boiling to dissolve the medium with frequent stirring. Sterilize by autoclaving at 15 lbs pressure (121°C) for 15 minutes. Add 10 ml of sterile defibrinated horse blood, 0.3 ml of sterile 100 u/ml Penicillin solution and 0.3 ml of 0.1% solution of 4:4 Diamido-diphenylamine hydrochloride per 100 ml of the medium.

**Principle And Interpretation**

The genus *Bordetella* contains four species: *Bordetella pertussis*, *Bordetella parapertussis*, *Bordetella bronchiseptica* and *Bordetella avium* (8). Genetic studies have shown that these organisms are very closely related to each other. Humans are the only host of *B. pertussis* and *B. parapertussis*, while *B. bronchiseptica* is found in a wide variety of animals and occasionally found in humans (7). *B. avium* is found in birds. *Bordetella* species are obligately aerobic and metabolically not very active. They are non-motile except *B. bronchiseptica*. *B. pertussis* is the major cause of whooping cough or pertussis. *B. parapertussis* is associated with a milder form of the disease (5). Primary isolation of *B. pertussis* in particular, requires the addition of charcoal, 15-20% blood to neutralize the growth-inhibiting effects. Isolation of this organism requires enrichment medium.

Charcoal Agar is prepared according to the method of Mishulow, Sharpe and Cohen (7). This medium can be used as a replacement for Bordet-Gengou Agar for isolation of *B. pertussis* and for the production of *B. pertussis* vaccines. Charcoal Agar supplemented with horse blood can also be used for the cultivation and isolation of *Haemophilus influenzae* (4).

The difficulty in the isolation of *Bordetella pertussis* from nasopharyngeal secretions is the inhibition of associated flora during the long incubation period on nutritious media. Penicillin is added to the medium as an antimicrobial agent for restricting the other contaminants. However, Penicillin resistant floras still cause contamination that was observed by Lacey (4). He therefore supplemented penicillin with diamidino-diphenylamine dihydrochloride, thereby increasing the selectivity of the medium. Meticillin was found to be superior to Penicillin in suppressing unwanted nasopharyngeal flora as observed by Broome et al. (1). Sutcliffe and Abbott found that Cephalixin was still better than Meticillin (10).

Regan and Lowe (9) have further showed that Charcoal Blood Agar Base of half strength with cephalixin is an excellent selective enrichment transport medium. Cephalixin is added to inhibit contaminant gram-positive organisms that may be present in specimen. Both non-selective and selective media should be inoculated since some *B. pertussis* strains may be slightly inhibited by cephalixin. Charcoal Blood Agar Base is used for the cultivation of *B. pertussis* for vaccine production. Medium ingredients like peptone, HM peptone B and yeast extract provide essential nutrients to the organisms. Sodium chloride maintains osmotic balance. Starch soluble and charcoal neutralizes substances toxic to *Bordetella* species such as fatty acids. Charcoal has the tendency to settle at the bottom of the flask. Therefore, before dispensing, swirl the flasks gently to obtain a uniform charcoal suspension (6).

The medium can also be used for the maintenance of stock cultures of *Bordetella pertussis* on slants with weekly subcultures.
**Type of specimen**
Pure isolates

**Specimen Collection and Handling:**
For pure isolate follow appropriate techniques for handling specimens as per established guidelines (2,3). After use, contaminated materials must be sterilized by autoclaving before discarding.

**Warning and Precautions :**
Read the label before opening the container. Wear protective gloves/protective clothing/eye protection/ face protection. Follow good microbiological lab practices while handling specimens and culture. Standard precautions as per established guidelines should be followed while handling specimens. Safety guidelines may be referred in individual safety data sheets.

**Limitations :**
1. Swirl the flask gently when dispensing to obtain a uniform charcoal suspension.

**Performance and Evaluation**
Performance of the medium is expected when used as per the direction on the label within expiry period the when stored at recommended temperature.

**Quality Control**

**Appearance**
Grey to greyish black homogeneous free flowing powder

**Gelling**
Firm, comparable with 1.2% Agar gel

**Colour and Clarity of prepared medium**
Black coloured, opaque gel with undissolved black particles forms in Petri plates

**Reaction**
Reaction of 5.45% w/v aqueous solution at 25°C. pH : 7.5±0.2

**pH**
7.30-7.70

**Cultural Response**
Cultural characteristics observed w/added sterile defibrinated blood and 100u/ml penicillin solution and 0.1% solution of 4:4 Diamido-diphenylamine hydrochloride, after an incubation at 35-37°C for 24-48 hours.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organism</th>
<th>Inoculum (CFU)</th>
<th>Growth</th>
<th>Recovery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Bordetella bronchiseptica</em></td>
<td>50-100</td>
<td>good-luxuriant</td>
<td>&gt;=50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATCC 4617</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Bordetella parapertussis</em></td>
<td>50-100</td>
<td>good-luxuriant</td>
<td>&gt;=50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATCC 15311</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Bordetella pertussis</em> ATCC 8467</td>
<td>50-100</td>
<td>good-luxuriant</td>
<td>&gt;=50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Staphylococcus aureus</em> subsp. aureus ATCC 25923 (00034*)</td>
<td>&gt;=10^4</td>
<td>inhibited</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Klebsiella pneumoniae</em> ATCC 13883 (00097*)</td>
<td>&gt;=10^4</td>
<td>inhibited</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key : *Corresponding WDCM numbers.

**Storage and Shelf Life**
Store between 10-30°C in a tightly closed container and the prepared medium at 2-8°C. Use before expiry date on the label. On opening, product should be properly stored dry, after tightly capping the bottle in order to prevent lump formation due to the hygroscopic nature of the product. Improper storage of the product may lead to lump formation. Store in dry ventilated area protected from extremes of temperature and sources of ignition. Seal the container tightly after use. Use before expiry date on the label.

Product performance is best if used within stated expiry period.

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Please refer disclaimer Overleaf.
Disposal
User must ensure safe disposal by autoclaving and/or incineration of used or unusable preparations of this product. Follow established laboratory procedures in disposing of infectious materials and material that comes into contact with clinical sample must be decontaminated and disposed of in accordance with current laboratory techniques (2,3).

Reference

Disclaimer:
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