

Biotest HYCON®

Agar Strips

Ready-to-use culture media on flexible strips for assessment of microbial levels in the air with the Biotest Air Samplers RCS, RCS Plus, RCS High Flow and RCS Isolator

Biotest offers different types of Agar Strips for determination of total count (also in gamma-irradiated, double wrapped packaging) of yeasts and moulds, and of staphylococci and coliform bacteria. A complete list of media is available at Biotest, Biotest subsidiaries or distributors.

A list of ingredients as well as the proposed field of application appear on the certificate of analysis enclosed in every box of Agar Strips. In addition, this certificate contains lot-specific data concerning the specificity and sterility control.

Handling

1. Open the wrapper for a few centimetres by peeling back the plastic seal at the rounded side of the wrapper. Remove the agar strip with the coated side facing downwards.
2. Insert the strip into the slot at the open end of the impeller drum or rotor according to the directions of use of the corresponding air sampler.
3. Place the instrument into required position and start the sampling procedure. When the sampling process is finished, pull the agar strip out and replace it into its original wrapper. Seal with adhesive tape or slide seals (Art. No. 941900) and label (e.g. date, sampling time or volume, area of measurement) for incubation.
4. The following incubation conditions are recommended:

Determination of	Time	Temperature
Total count	1 - 5 days	30 °C - 35 °C
Yeasts and moulds	3 - 7 days	20 °C - 25 °C
Staphylococci, coliforms	1 - 3 days*	30 °C - 35 °C

- * On Agar Strips S for staphylococci the typical growth pattern (colour change to yellow by fermentation of mannitol) are reached usually after 18 - 24 hours incubation time. Prolonged incubation time may yield higher colony counts, yet growth might be less specific.
5. Count colonies grown on agar strip.

Important directions

The following guidelines should be observed when working with agar strips:

1. Before use check the unopened strip visually for desiccation or contamination. Contaminated strips should be discarded.
2. Practice aseptic technique when handling the agar strip.
3. In order to eliminate the risk of contamination by material and personnel required to carry out the measuring, ensure that a distance is kept and avoid using too much material.

4. The coated surface of the agar strips should face down during incubation in order to avoid the formation of satellites created by condensation.
5. Where stipulated, different official or internal recommendations for incubation times and temperatures may be used.

Storage and expiration date

(☼) Biotest HYCON Agar Strips should be stored in a controlled environment protected from light. If exposed to light for an extended period of time, the inhibitory supplements and dyes found in the media could be destroyed. In particular YM – Rose Bengal, C – MacConkey Agar, and S – Mannitol Salt Agar should always be stored under these conditions.

(🔧) Agar strips C-MacConkey Agar, PEN-Penase and S – Mannitol Salt Agar should be stored between 2°C and 15°C in the original Styrofoam box. All other agar strips can be stored between 2°C and 25°C.

Possible storage conditions:

- Room Temperature:

20°-25°C in the original packaging. It is not necessary to allow the strips to come to room temperature if stored under these conditions.

- Refrigerator: 2°C – 8°C

- Bottle Refrigerator: 8°C – 15°C

Important Notice:

To prevent condensation in the outer packaging of the agar strip, avoid changes between the different storage conditions.

During storage agar media should not be placed near heat sources. Heat sources will cause water loss and condensation, ultimately destroying the integrity of the product.

Examples of heat sources:

- Room heating systems
- Refrigerator
- The condenser on the back of the refrigerator is an intermittent heat source.

The boxes should be stored with the coated side of the agar strip facing downwards (label should be readable on boxes with 50 pieces; label should be faced downwards on boxes with 25 pieces).

(🗑️) The expiration date is printed on the package label.

Disposal of used agar strips

Living microorganisms grown up on the agar strips must be destroyed prior to disposal. Therefore the agar strips can be autoclaved (for example in accordance with the Communicable Diseases Law Reform Act: for 20 min at 121 °C), burned or treated with suitable biocide. Where stipulated, the official country specific or internal guidelines must be followed.