

## **Inoculation of Blood Agar and Mannitol Salts Agar with Skin Microflora**

Each student will inoculate a Blood Agar Plate (BAP) and a Mannitol Salts Agar plate (MSA) with skin microflora.

1. First, label each plate with some type of identifying mark or code (not your name or initials) so that you can identify your plate anonymously.
2. Using sterile saline, moisten a sterile cotton swab.
3. Use the moist swab to sample an area skin on your body.
4. Rub the swab on the first “sector” of both agar plates, going back and forth within the sector several times.
5. Properly dispose of the swab by returning it to the sterile test tube. Set the tube in a rack for sterilization.
6. Finish streaking the plate with a loop as you normally do for a streak plate.
7. Incubate the plates at 35 °C for 24-48 hours. The blood agar plates may be incubated in a candle jar to increase the CO<sub>2</sub> levels and enhance bacterial growth.

The use of the Blood Agar Plate is described on p. 48-49 of the atlas, and the use of Mannitol Salts Agar plate is described on p. 18-19 of the atlas. Study these sections to become familiar with these differential media and the types of organisms that the media are used.

What makes each of these media differential?

Mannitol Salts Agar is also a selective medium. What makes this medium selective?