



Charcoal Agar Base with Niacin

M1053

Charcoal Agar Base with Niacin is recommended for the cultivation of *Bordetella pertussis* and *Haemophilus influenzae*.

Composition**

Ingredients	Gms / Litre
Pancreatic digest of gelatin	10.000
Beef extract	10.000
Sodium chloride	5.000
Starch	10.000
Nicotinic acid (Niacin)	0.001
Charcoal	4.000
Agar	12.000
Final pH (at 25°C)	7.4±0.2

**Formula adjusted, standardized to suit performance parameters

Directions

Suspend 51.0 grams in 900 ml distilled water. Heat to boiling to dissolve the medium with frequent stirring. Sterilize by autoclaving at 15 lbs pressure (121°C) for 15 minutes. Cool to 50°C and aseptically add sterile 10 % of defibrinated blood and rehydrated contents of one vial of Bordetella Selective Supplement (FD004). Mix well and pour into sterile Petri plates. For *Haemophilus* species the medium can be converted to chocolate agar.

Principle And Interpretation

The genus *Bordetella* contains four species : *Bordetella pertussis*, *Bordetella parapertussis*, *Bordetella bronchiseptica* and *Bordetella avium* (1). 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 (2). *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 (3). 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 (2). 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).

Medium ingredients like pancreatic digest of gelatin and beef 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 (7).

The difficulty in the isolation of *Bordetella pertussis* from nasopharyngeal secretions is the repression of unwanted flora during the long incubation period on nutritious media. Penicillin can be added to the medium as an antimicrobial agent for restricting the other contaminants. However Penicillin resistant flora still causes the contamination that was observed by Lacey (4). Necessity of the Nicotinic acid as a growth factor was showed by Proom (8). Methicillin was found to be superior to Penicillin in suppressing unwanted nasopharyngeal flora as observed by Broome et al (5). Sutcliffe and Abbott found that Cephalexin was still better than Methicillin (6).

