

# Determination of Airborne Mold Spores with Easygel®

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The Easygel bottles and special petri dishes are sterile. Handle them carefully. The medium is formulated to favor mold growth over that of other types of microbes.

## Procedure

1. Determine the number of locations to be tested. Remove the corresponding number of petri dishes from a sleeve and lay them on a level surface with the lid side up. Close the sleeve if any petri dishes are unused. Do not touch the inside of the petri dishes or expose them to the outside environment until you are ready to use them. Label the bottom of the dishes with a wax pencil or magic marker with the date, location of dish, and length of exposure, if this has already been determined. Otherwise this may be done at the end of the exposure period.
2. Lift the lid of a petri dish and pour the Easygel into the dish bottom. Replace the lid and swirl gently until the bottom is covered. Allow to solidify for 40 minutes. To avoid waiting, you may wish to pour the dishes a day in advance. Poured dishes have an excellent shelf life.
3. Carry the dish(es) to the area(s) (Air ducts or carpeted areas with heavy traffic are good test areas) you wish to test. Place the dish(es) on a steady surface, and remove the lid. Leave open dishes exposed to the environment for a given period of time - 1 hour is suggested. Replace the lid(s) once the desired time has been reached.
4. Incubate upright at 25°-32°C (or a warm place in your house) and check for microbial growth at 24 hour intervals. Any growth should be visible in 48-72 hours. Record the number of mold colonies. Molds grow on or in Easygel as fuzzy-looking circular colonies on the surface the medium. The colonies may remain small or may spread considerably. They may be colorless, whitish, or various other colors. As they mature, they will commonly develop color in the colony center from the production of spores. DO NOT incubate in any strong direct light.
5. Tape the dish lids so that there is no danger of them falling off and spreading spores from the growing molds into the environment for further contamination. Less than 6 colonies/dish indicates relatively clean air. More than 15 colonies/dish is reason for concern and calls for action to find and remove the source(s).
6. Any unused Easygel bottles and petri dishes may be stored at room temperature to be used at a later time. They have a shelf life of 1 year (see package labeling).

Disposal of used petri dishes may be accomplished by placing 5 mL (about 1 teaspoon) of bleach into each dish so that the surface is flooded. Allow to stand for at least 5 minutes and then place in water-tight bag and discard in trash. Plastic petri dishes are intended for one-time use only.

## **Micrology Laboratories,**

Call toll free 888.327.9435 [www.micrologylabs.com](http://www.micrologylabs.com)

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