



MEMORANDUM

To: OSF System Laboratory Clients who collect Pap tests using ThinPrep vials
From: Travis Blunier, Pathology Manager and Kristi Williams, Outreach Lab Manager
Subject: Lubricant use during Pap sample collection
Date: January 2, 2015

Dear Colleague,

Over the last several months, the cytology department at OSF System Laboratory has noticed an increase in the unsatisfactory rates for Pap smear results. While the current unsatisfactory rate is still below the 50th percentile as benchmarked nationally with our peers, we have been consulting with Hologic, our ThinPrep vendor, in an attempt to improve our process and provide better service for you and your patients. Hologic has reviewed our procedures for the processing of the Pap test and they have come to two conclusions.

The first conclusion is that a lubricant is being utilized that contains carbomers (a thickening agent). Regardless of the quality of carbomers used, it is not recommended for utilization in conjunction with the ThinPrep Pap Test. Supplementary to this memo and for your reference, Hologic has provided information on appropriate sample collection options.

The second conclusion is that cellular material is adhering to the collection device (sampling broom or brush). Hologic suggests for clients to follow the Best Practice Standards developed and tested by Hologic and approved by the FDA for obtaining optimal ThinPrep Pap samples. Too often, the collection device is left in the ThinPrep vial. The FDA approved process includes discarding the collection device once the collection device has been properly rotated and swirled in the ThinPrep vial. The collection device should not be placed or broken off into the ThinPrep vial following collection. We have included Hologic's Best Practice Standards for Obtaining Gynecological Samples for your review.

See next page for summary guidance.

In conclusion, in accordance with the manufacturer's guidance and ThinPrep collection guide:

- (1) Do not use lubricant gels that contain carbomer or carbopol polymers as these agents interfere with the ThinPrep test when present in the patient's sample vial.
- (2) If using a broom for sample collection, push the broom into the bottom of the vial **10 times**, followed by a final vigorous swirl.
- (3) If using a brush for sample collection, rotate the device in the solution **10 times** while pushing against the vial wall, followed by a final vigorous swirl.
- (4) Always discard the broom or brush. Do not leave any part of the collection device in the vial.

Thank you for your assistance with ensuring that proper collection and preparation protocols are used as to safeguard against unsatisfactory patient specimens.

Sincerely,

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