

Introduction to aseptic technique

Tissue culture is very susceptible to contamination from airborne micro-organisms. The growth medium used is very rich and able to sustain growth of virtually anything. It is therefore necessary to work in such a way as to reduce the risk of contamination. There are several precautions which should be observed.

1. Wear a lab coat (if possible have a different one for tissue culture).
2. Wash your hands before starting.
3. Always work with the fan on in the laminar flow hood.
4. Rinse bottles with 70% ethanol after removing them from the 37°C water bath.
5. Clean the surface of the hood with 70% ethanol when you have finished.
6. Clean the platform of the microscope with 70% ethanol after using it.
7. Clean up any spills of medium in the incubators immediately with 70% ethanol.
8. Switch on the UV light when you are finished in the hood.
9. Change the water in the 37°C at least once a month or if you see stuff growing in it. It is left on all the time and is a major source of contamination. Use tap deionized water only and add a little Bath Clear solution.
10. Once a month (or if you have suffered serious contamination) the incubators should be cleaned. Remove the shelves, wash them with soap then 70% ethanol and replace the
11. water in the bottom tray (using deionized water only) and add a little Bath Clear solution.