

Medical Technology

ASCP-BOC
ASCP Histotechnician (HT) Exam (ASCP BOC)



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Question: 1

Heat fixation should NOT be used for which of the following stains?

- A. Capsular staining
- B. Gram stain
- C. Endospore staining
- D. Acid-fast stain

Answer: A

Explanation:

Most bacteria produce a capsule, or glycocalyx, just outside the cell wall. This capsule is usually made up of polysaccharides. Heat fixation will cause this moist slime layer to shrink, making it difficult to see once stained. Also, heat fixing may cause a bacterial cell to shrink, creating a clear zone around the cell that appears like a capsule when one does not truly exist. Therefore, when staining to view a bacterial capsule, a sample is air-dried and then a negative stain is generally used for visualization.

Question: 2

Which of the following is an example of a noncoagulant fixative?

- A. Picric acid
- B. Zinc salts
- C. Ethanol
- D. Formaldehyde

Answer: D

Explanation:

Coagulant fixatives allow solutions to readily enter into the interior of the tissue, but they destroy or distort cytoplasmic organelles such as mitochondria and lysosomes. Noncoagulant fixatives, such as formaldehyde, cross-link the structural macromolecules of the tissue, creating a gel that preserves organelles well but inhibits the penetration of solutions into the tissue.

Question: 3

Which of the following methods could be used to remove mercury pigment, a fixation artifact?

- A. Treat the specimen with an iodine solution followed by bleaching with sodium thiosulfate
- B. Treat the specimen with saturated alcoholic picric acid
- C. Treat specimen with 10% ammonium hydroxide in 70% ethyl alcohol
- D. Treat the specimen with 1% acid alcohol

Answer: A

Explanation:

Mercury pigment can be removed by treating the specimen with an iodine solution followed by bleaching with sodium thiosulfate. Formalin pigment and malarial pigment can both be removed by either treating the specimen with saturated alcoholic picric acid or by treating the specimen with 10% ammonium hydroxide in 70% ethyl alcohol. Chromic oxide pigment can be removed using 1% acid alcohol.

Question: 4

Which of the following fixative reagents causes tissue swelling?

- A. Mercuric chloride
- B. Picric acid
- C. Acetic acid
- D. Ethanol

Answer: C

Explanation:

Acetic acid causes swelling of tissue. On the other hand, picric acid, mercuric chloride, and ethanol all cause tissues to shrink. Bouin solution, a fixative compound, balances these effects by combining acetic acid with picric acid.

Question: 5

Which of the following fixative reagents does NOT cause tissue hardening?

- A. Picric acid
- B. Formalin
- C. Acetone
- D. Mercuric chloride

Answer: A

Explanation:

Formalin, acetone, and mercuric chloride all cause tissue hardening; therefore,

it is important to make sure the fixation time is not prolonged when using these reagents to prevent tissues from becoming too brittle.

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