

Vaginal pH Paper

Hydrion pH 4.5-7.5
Paper

*** READ POLICY PRIOR
TO STARTING
TUTORIAL**



Before Testing a Patient

◆ Orient yourself to your working area

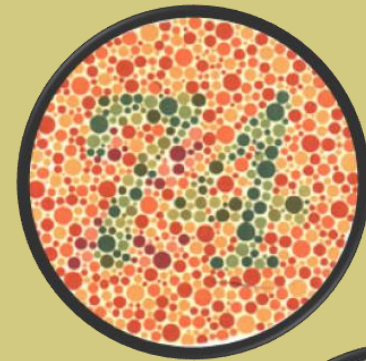
- ◆ Locate the pH paper roll with color card.
- ◆ Locate testing supplies:
 - Swabs
 - Sterile Gloves
 - IDA page for your testing location



Qualified Personnel

- ◆ Staff approved to perform this POCT must first pass a Color Discrimination Test provided by Occupational Health or the Clinical Laboratory.

(You may arrange to take this exam with the POCT Service Team.)



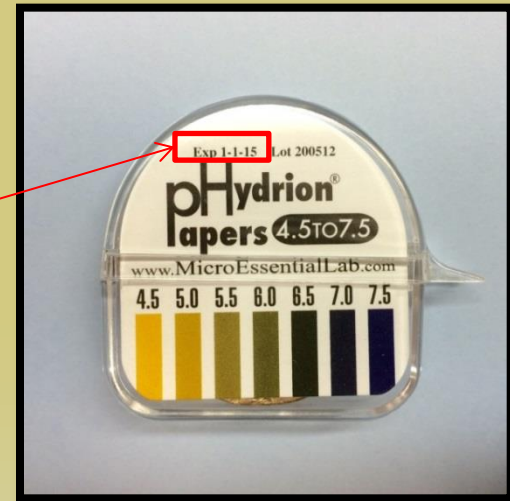
Vaginal pH Paper

- ◇ Testing using vaginal pH paper is considered **Waived** in complexity by the FDA.
- ◇ **Purpose:** determination of vaginal pH as an aid in:
 - ◆ Detection of ruptured amniotic membranes in pregnant women.
 - ◆ Detection of bacterial vaginosis and trichomonas infection.
- ◇ **Quality Control** is performed by the Clinical Laboratory.



Vaginal pH Paper

- ◇ pH paper must be stored in its original container at room temperature. Record daily temperature on temp log.
- ◇ Avoid exposure to excessive heat, direct sun light and moisture.
- ◇ Only use non-expired pH paper measuring 4.5-7.5.
- ◇ Do not use pH paper that is colored blue prior to coming into contact with vaginal fluid.
- ◇ Do not reuse pH paper as it is potentially infectious.



NOTE: Tan or olive green base color will not interfere with accurate test.

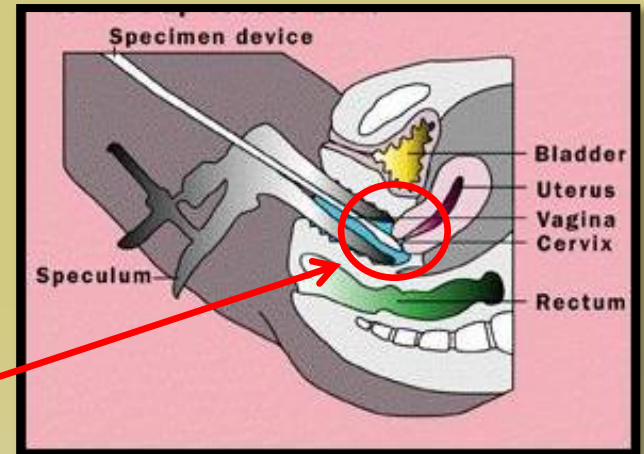
Patient Testing Procedure

- ◇ To perform patient testing, first verify the correct patient using two forms of identification (full name and date of birth).
- ◇ Explain the procedure to the patient and/or family.
- ◇ Observe **universal precautions** and wear gloves and other PPE as needed.



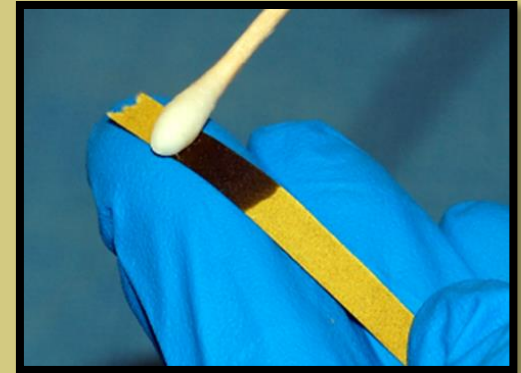
Patient Testing Procedure

- ◇ Remove one to two inches of pH paper from the dispenser for each test. DO NOT allow it to come into contact with any liquid of other substance, which might affect pH.
- ◇ Insert a vaginal speculum and obtain a sample of vaginal discharge or fluid from the back of the vagina using a cotton tipped swab.



Patient Testing Procedure

- ◇ Smear the fluid from the swab onto the pH paper.
- ◇ Observe for **immediate** color change by comparing it to the color chart on the dispenser.
- ◇ Record the numeric value, corresponding to the color change, in the patient's medical record.
 - ◆ A pH >4.5 may indicate ruptured amniotic membranes, bacterial vaginosis or trichomonas.
 - ◆ Note that semen and urine may also raise the pH to above 4.5.



Confirmatory Testing

- ◇ pH testing is not intended as a stand-alone test for the conditions listed. At the discretion of the provider, per departmental policies or standardized procedures additional tests or procedures should be performed routinely or when pH testing yields unexpected or discrepant results.

Confirmation

Limitations

- ◇ pH paper, used for semi-quantitative measurement of vaginal pH is intended for use by qualified medical and nursing staff only as an aid to professional diagnosis and treatment.
- ◇ Antibiotic therapy or infections of the vagina can lead to elevated vaginal pH which could be interpreted falsely as the presence of amniotic fluid. Where doubt exists, standard microbiological testing should be employed to exclude infection.
- ◇ pH testing cannot distinguish amniotic fluid from urine. In instances where there is the possibility of urine contamination and/or where the patient has received antibiotic therapy, “fern” testing may be of value to verify the presence of amniotic fluid.
- ◇ False-positive reactions (elevated vaginal pH) may also occur due to alkalization of the vagina by blood, semen, soap and antiseptic solutions.
- ◇ False-negative reactions in the detection of premature rupture of membranes may occur due to decrease efflux of amniotic fluid as the time between membrane rupture and testing increases.



For Further Questions or Information
Contact POCT Services

SFGH-POCT.org