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Just the Facts ...

Management of Waste from the ThinPrep® Processor

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BACKGROUND: The ThinPrep® Pap Test is a method for the automated preparation of microscopic slides for cervical cell samples. MEDCOM has replaced the conventional Pap smear for cervical cancer screening with this liquid-based technology. With ThinPrep, the cervical sample device is deposited in a vial filled with CYTYC's PreservCyt® solution, the vial is then forwarded to the lab. At the lab, the vial is inserted into a ThinPrep processor that removes the blood and mucus and homogenizes the cell population. The cells are spread in a thin layer, transferred onto a glass slide and treated with a preservative solution.

SOLUTIONS: ThinPrep process uses PreservCyt and CytoLyt® solutions. The PreservCyt is a methanol-based, buffered preservative solution used to support cells during transport and slide preparation. The CytoLyt is a methanol-based, buffered transport solution used in specimen preparation prior to processing. Both solutions are flammable and toxic. They have flashpoints of 80°F and 109°F, respectively. The Material Safety Data Sheets for these two solutions are available on the Internet at <http://www.cytyc.com/85507Srv/tsmsds.htm>.

MANAGEMENT OF WASTE: There are two waste streams generated with the ThinPrep process. The first waste stream is the excess PreservCyt solution that is left in the vial. The vials each contain 20 ml of a methanol-based solution. Once the specimen is removed and processed, 1-19 ml of residual material remains in the vial. A local decision should be made about the privacy act data on the vials and how to dispose of the vials. The second waste stream is the waste that comes out of the ThinPrep processor. This is the methanol-based PreservCyt solution and possibly CytoLyt solution. Both waste streams need to be collected and managed as a D001 ignitable hazardous waste. Although the manufacturer has stated that waste generated from the processor is not infectious, the hazardous waste disposal contractor may require the generator to provide a written verification stating such.

SHIPPING/PACKAGING: Since these solutions are flammable and toxic there are packaging and shipping requirements for both the virgin materials and materials with specimens. For some specific information on packaging and shipping specimens, please see the following USACHPPM Fact Sheet: [Packaging Hospital Samples and Specimens for Transport](#) or contact the local transportation office for further information on shipping the specimens by commercial transport.

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