

MycAssay™ Aspergillus Stratagene Mx3000 series

REF 080-050

Intended Use:

MycAssay™ Aspergillus is a Real-Time PCR kit for the detection of *Aspergillus* DNA using the Stratagene Mx3000 series instruments, either Mx3000P® or Mx3005P®, (using MxPro software version 4.10).

Principles of the Procedure

Following mixing of the reagents in the MycAssay™ Aspergillus kit with a sample containing the *Aspergillus* target DNA sequence (a section of the *Aspergillus* ribosomal 18S gene), thermocycling will result in DNA amplification occurring. The assay also contains an Internal Amplification Control (IAC), a DNA fragment not present in *Aspergillus*, other fungal, bacterial or human genomes, to detect PCR inhibitory substances and confirm the functionality of the assay reagents.

The amplified DNA targets are detected using Molecular Beacon technology. Molecular Beacons are single-stranded oligonucleotide hybridisation probes that form a stem-and-loop structure. The loop contains a probe sequence that is complementary to a target sequence, and the stem is formed by the annealing of complementary arm sequences that are located on either side of the probe sequence. A fluorophore, which fluoresces when excited by light of the appropriate wavelength, is covalently linked to the end of one arm and a quencher, which suppresses the fluorescence of the fluorophore when in close physical proximity, is covalently linked to the end of the other arm. Molecular beacons do not fluoresce when they are free in solution. However, when they hybridise to a nucleic acid strand containing a target sequence they undergo a conformational change that physically separates the fluorophore and the quencher enabling them to fluoresce upon excitation. The amount of fluorescence at any given cycle, or following cycling, depends on the amount of specific amplicons present at that time. The Real-Time PCR System simultaneously monitors the fluorescence emitted by each beacon.

Precautions

- The kit is for Research Use Only. It is Not for Use in Diagnostic Procedures.
- The kit is intended for use only by laboratory professionals. Procedures are required for non-aerosol manipulations of specimens. Standard precautions and institutional guidelines should be followed in handling all samples. A Material Safety Data Sheet is available from Myconostica Ltd.
- This test is only for use with the Stratagene Mx3000 series instruments, either Mx3000P® or Mx3005P®, (using MxPro software version 4.10).
- The instrument can lose sensitivity if used sequentially. Please allow the lamp to cool for at least 1 hour before starting a MycAssay™ Aspergillus run to avoid false negatives.
- Do not use reagents or controls if the protective pouches are open or broken when received.
- Reagents and controls are not interchangeable between kits with different lot numbers.
- Never pool reagents or controls from different tubes even if they are from the same lot.
- Never use the reagents or controls after their expiry date.
- Reagents and controls should not be re-frozen or re-used after opening.
- Wear protective clothing and disposable gloves while handling kit reagents.
- Avoid microbial and deoxyribonuclease (DNase) contamination of reagents when removing aliquots from tubes.
- The use of sterile, DNase-free, low-retention disposable filter-tips or positive displacement pipette tips is recommended.
- Use a new tip for each specimen or reagent.
- Dispose of unused reagents and waste in accordance with country, federal, state and local regulations.
- To avoid contamination with *Aspergillus* or IAC amplicons, do not open the reaction tubes after amplification.
- Additional controls may be tested according to guidelines or regulations of local, state, provincial, federal or accrediting organisations.
- Do not eat, drink or smoke in areas where specimens or kit reagents are being handled.
- Low concentrations of DNA can be unstable if not stored correctly. It is recommended that DNA extractions from samples are stored at -80°C to preserve

their integrity. Multiple rounds of thawing and refreezing should also be avoided whenever possible.

- This kit was validated using 0.2ml 8-strip PCR tubes with attached caps (Starlab Cat # A1402-3700). Use of other sources/types of plastic could invalidate the thresholds and, therefore, the claims made in the IFU. It is recommended that should an alternative source be used, that local validation should be conducted with the positive and negative control reactions.

Kit Contents

Description

The kit consists of five 3-compartment sealed foil pouches each of which can be removed from the box and used separately. Each pouch contains sufficient reagents for 8 reactions.

		<u>Volume</u>
Tube 1 (Orange Cap)	dNTPs MgCl ₂ Buffered solution of DNA Polymerase complex	66 µL
Tube 2 (Green Cap)	<0.01% Primers <0.01% Molecular Beacons <0.0001% Internal Amplification Control (IAC) The Internal Amplification Control is a recombinant DNA plasmid containing a non-infective sequence unrelated to target (<i>Aspergillus</i>) sequence Tris-HCl Buffer	66 µL
Tube 3 (Clear Cap)	Negative Control Water	25 µL
Tube 4 (Black Cap)	Positive Control <0.0001% Positive Control DNA The Positive Control molecule is a recombinant plasmid containing the <i>Aspergillus</i> target sequence Tris-HCl Buffer	25 µL

The kit also contains:

- MycAssay™ Aspergillus Myconostica Protocol CD-ROM
- Instructions for Use
- Certificate of Analysis

Storage

The kit should be stored frozen (-15 to -25 °C) until the expiry date indicated on the kit box label, when it should be disposed of according to local regulations.

Once a pouch has been opened, the contents must be used immediately, not re-frozen or re-used at a later date.

Equipment/Materials required but not provided

- Stratagene Mx3000 series Real-Time PCR System (including user manual, attached computer and MxPro software version 4.10)
- 0.2ml 8-strip PCR tubes with attached caps (Starlab Cat # A1402-3700)
- Support rack for 0.2ml tubes (strips of 8)
- Mini-centrifuge adapted for 8-strip 0.2ml tubes
- Micro centrifuge
- Vortex mixer
- Micropipettes (volumes required 7.5 µL – 20 µL)
- Sterile low-retention filtertips
- Disposable gloves, powderless
- Proprietary DNA decontaminating solution
- Permanent marker pen
- DNA isolation kit (see below)

Sample

The sample for the MycAssay™ Aspergillus assay is total genomic DNA.

Procedural Notes

- Read the entire protocol before commencing.
- The entire MycAssay™ Aspergillus process (excluding DNA extraction) takes approximately 2 hours, dependent on the number of samples tested.
- Setting up of the test should be performed in a PCR workstation or pre-PCR laboratory. If a PCR workstation is not available, then the test should be set-up in a dedicated area of the laboratory¹, separated from areas used for DNA extractions, that is regularly cleaned with DNA decontaminating reagents.
- However, avoid using DNA decontaminating reagents when performing the Real-Time PCR set-up as they can inhibit the assay.
- Use micropipettes for the transfer of fluids. Dedicated micropipettes should be used for the set-up of these reactions and they should be regularly decontaminated.
- Low-retention filtertips are recommended for use to ensure that no DNA is lost during the set-up procedure.
- **Exercise caution when handling Tube 4. This contains positive control DNA material and contamination could cause false positive test results.**
- Wear gloves at all times.
- All reagent tubes must be capped following use and prior to disposal.
- On the Stratagene Mx3000 series: number the strips of plastic which attach the cap to the tube (not the cap itself) and make a note of what each number corresponds to.

Procedure for Use:

1. Real-Time PCR Set-Up

- 1.1 To begin, switch on the Real-Time PCR System (instrument and associated computer) and launch the relevant software. Enter usernames and passwords as required.
- 1.2 Ensure the work area has been cleaned using DNA decontaminating reagents and allowed to dry completely; avoid use during assay set-up as excess cleaning solution may inhibit the PCR reactions.
- 1.3 A pouch contains one each of Tube 1, Tube 2, Tube 3 and Tube 4. There are sufficient reagents in one pouch to run 8 reactions. At least one positive

¹ For example see Mifflin, T. E. (2003). Setting up a PCR Laboratory. *In* PCR Primer, 2nd Ed. (eds. Dieffenbach and Dveksler). Cold Spring Harbour Laboratory Press, Cold Spring Harbour, NY, USA.

control and one negative control reaction must be performed per run where the reagents are from a single kit lot. One pouch therefore can analyse 6 test samples. If more than 6 samples need to be tested, more than one pouch can be used if the pouches used are from the same kit lot. A maximum of 38 test samples may be tested using the 5 pouches in a kit.

- 1.4 Calculate the number of reactions required, referring to the table below:

Number of Pouches	Maximum number of test samples
1	6
2	14
3	22
4	30
5	38

- 1.5 Remove the appropriate number of pouches from the freezer. Do not use any pouch that is no longer sealed. If the test samples were frozen after extraction, also remove these from the freezer.
- 1.6 Tear open the required number of pouches and remove the tubes. If more than one pouch is being used, but only one set of positive and negative controls are being run, it is only necessary to remove Tubes 3 and 4 from one pouch. **Exercise caution when handling Tube 4. This contains positive control DNA material and contamination could cause false positive test results.**
- 1.7 Allow the tubes' contents to thaw by placing on the laboratory bench for 5-10 minutes, ensuring that the contents of each tube are completely thawed before proceeding. Vortex mix the tubes' contents and the test samples; follow by a short spin in a microcentrifuge to ensure collection of all the contents at the base of the tubes before use. Place the required number of 0.2 mL PCR tubes in a support rack. Take care not to leave any marks on the optical cap.
- 1.8 Always set up the negative control first, followed by the test samples. The positive control should always be set up last.

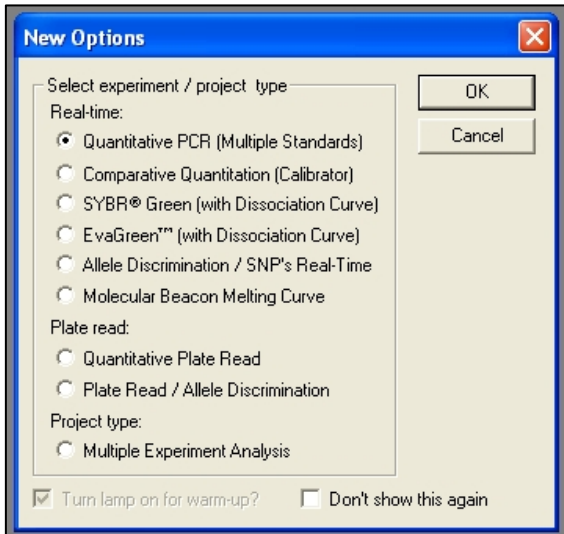
1.9 Reagent and DNA volumes are shown in the table below:

Reagent	Reaction		
	Negative control	Test sample	Positive control
Tube 1 (Orange cap)	7.5 µL	7.5 µL	7.5 µL
Tube 2 (Green cap)	7.5 µL	7.5 µL	7.5 µL
Tube 3 (Clear cap)	10 µL	-	-
Test Sample	-	10 µL	-
Tube 4 (Black cap)	-	-	10 µL
Total volume	25 µL	25 µL	25 µL

- 1.10 Add reagents in the order shown in the table above; Tube 1, then Tube 2, followed by the template (Negative control, Test sample, or Positive control). Take care when taking aliquots from Tube 1; the liquid is slightly viscous and can stick on the inner ridge of the tube. If this happens, re-spin to collect the final contents in the base of the tube before attempting to remove the final aliquots.
- 1.11 Use a new pipette tip for every liquid transfer. Re-cap each reagent tube after use and immediately discard it, and any remaining contents, into a sealable clinical waste container. Unused reagents cannot be saved for later use.
- 1.12 Take extra care when pipetting Tube 4 (positive control DNA) to ensure it does not contaminate any other reaction tube. Closing the lids on the other reaction tubes before opening Tube 4 can reduce the risk of cross-contamination.
- 1.13 Make sure all reaction tube lids are firmly closed but do not mark the actual lids. Instead, use the strip of plastic that attaches each cap to each tube. Spin down the tubes for 10 seconds using the mini-centrifuge adapted for 0.2 mL PCR tubes.
- 1.14 Proceed to Section 2 promptly. MycAssay™ Aspergillus reactions are stable on the bench for up to 60 minutes.
- 1.15 Following the PCR set-up ensure the work area is thoroughly cleaned using DNA decontaminating reagents.

2. Performing the run

- 2.1 Open up the MxPro software, version 4.10.
- 2.2 Insert the MycAssay Aspergillus Myconostica Protocol CD-ROM
- 2.3 In the New Options menu, select the first option: Real Time: Quantitative PCR (Multiple Standards), and click OK, as shown:



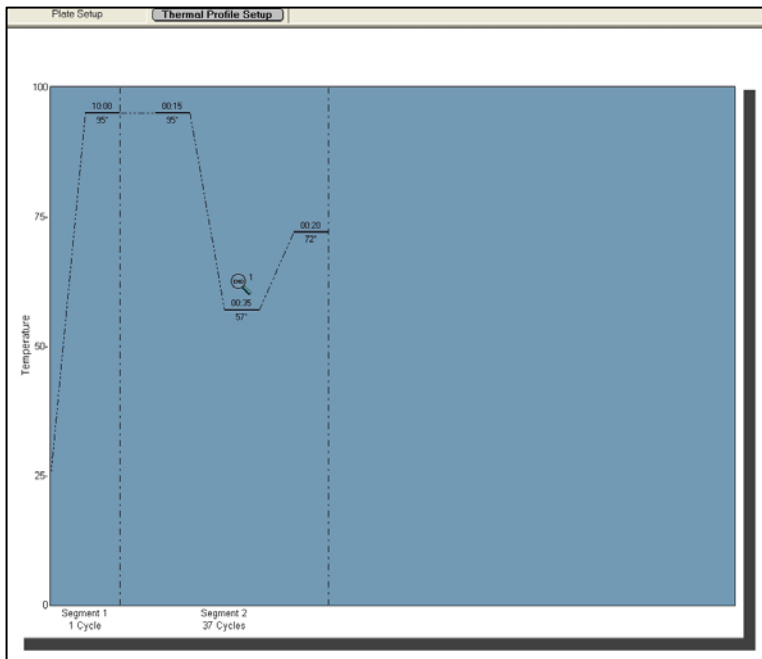
- 2.4 In the **Plate Setup** tab, click on the **Import** button on the right. Select the **MycAssay Asp Myconostica Protocol CD-ROM** from the drop-down list in **Look-In:** and then import the file named **MycAssay Aspergillus v2.mxp**. Click **Finish**. Once this is completed the **Plate Setup** should look like this example;

The screenshot displays the 'Plate Setup' tab of the MycAssay software. The main area shows a 96-well plate grid with columns labeled 1-12 and rows labeled A-H. Each well contains a 'Well Type' dropdown menu, all of which are currently set to 'Blank'. The right-hand side of the interface contains a configuration panel with the following options:

- Import: Defaults
- Quick Setup
- Well type: Unknown
- Show Well Names
- Collect Reference data: CYS BKX F88
- C33 BKX
- Reference file: none
- Group Assay Names
- Standard quantity: 1
- Standard units: none
- Identify well sites
- Resolute output: none
- Adjustment
- Clear Selected Wells
- Plate setup comments
- Full Screen Plate
- Next >

At the bottom of the window, there are two 'Message shown' indicators, one for 'Blank' and one for 'ASP'.

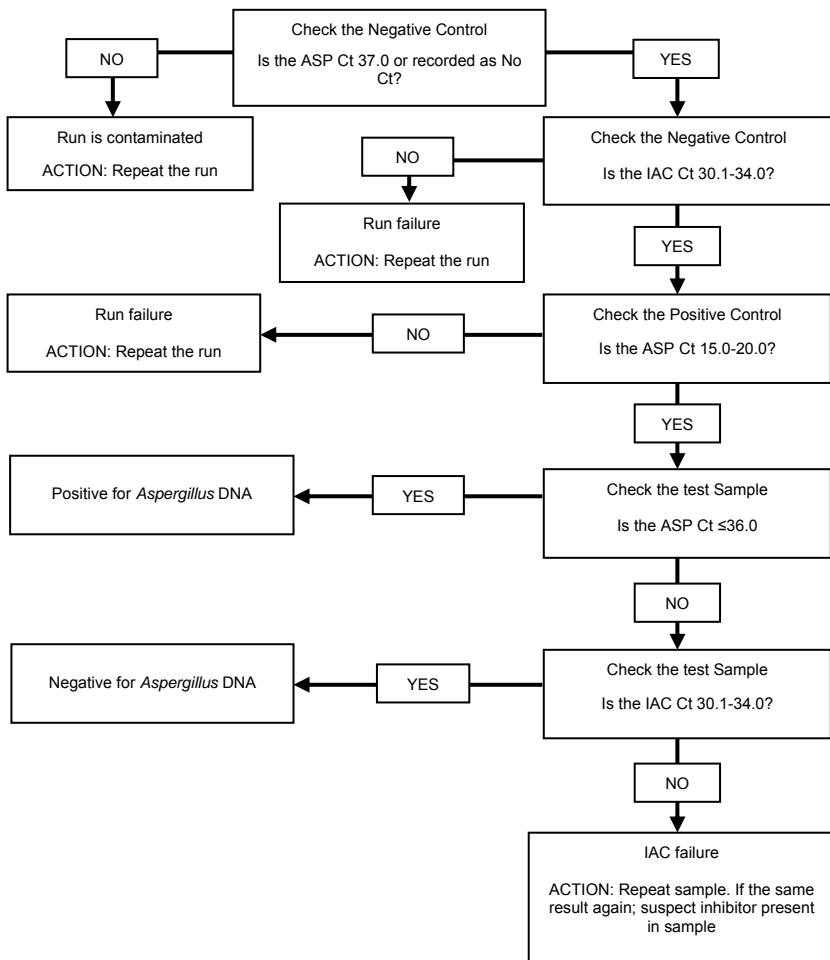
- 2.5 It is recommended that in those wells which are empty that the **Well Type** be set to **<blank>** to prevent refraction of light from the plastic interfering with the signals from those wells which do contain reactions.
- 2.6 Repeat the import process in the **Thermal Profile Setup** tab to import the PCR program for this assay; set the **Thermal Profile Design** to **Custom** and then **Import** from the same file as described in 2.4. Once this is completed the **Thermal Profile Setup** should look like this example;



- 2.7 In the **Plate Setup** tab, name the wells appropriately; Right click on a highlighted well (or group of wells if replicates) and select **Well Information** from the list of options. Type in the name of the sample used in that well in the **Name:** section.
- 2.8 When all the wells are named appropriately, save the run, giving it an appropriate file name that includes the date and the operator's initials, and then start the run by selecting the **Run** button on the top right of the screen in the **Instrument** tab, followed by clicking on the **Start** button in the bottom right corner.

3. Data Analysis and Interpretation

- 3.1 Once the run has finished, the results can be viewed by selecting the **Analysis** button on the top right of the screen, followed by the **Results** tab.
- 3.2 With the **Amplification Plots analysis area** selected, set the thresholds for each channel as follows, and lock by clicking on the padlock icon;
ASP = 1000
IAC = 100
- 3.3 The **Adaptive Baseline** should also be selected; this is usually the default setting for this software.
- 3.4 Save the changes. Each channel can be viewed separately by clicking the boxes in the Assays Shown section in the bottom left of the screen on or off.
- 3.5 Data can be exported for further manipulation in to Excel by **File>Export Text Report>Export Text Report to Excel**. Only those wells/dyes which have been highlighted will be exported, so ensure that all relevant/required wells/dyes are selected.
- 3.6 Open the saved .csv file with Excel or similar spreadsheet software.
- 3.7 Analyse each sample, starting with the controls, as shown in the flowchart (details can also be found in the table shown following the flowchart):



Sample	ASP MycAssay Ct	IAC MycAssay Ct	Interpretation
Negative Control	37.0 or No Ct	Within 30.1-34.0	Negative Control acceptable
Negative Control	37.0 or No Ct	<30.1 or >34.0	Failure in Negative Control
Negative Control	<37.0	Within 30.1-34.0	Contamination
Positive Control	Within 15.0-20.0	N/A	Positive Control acceptable
Positive Control	<15.0 or >20.0	N/A	Failure in Positive Control
Test	≥37.0 or No Ct	Within 30.1-34.0	Negative for <i>Aspergillus</i>
Test	<37.0	N/A	Positive for <i>Aspergillus</i>
Test	37.0 or Undetected	<30.1 or >34.0	IAC failure in sample

4. Troubleshooting

4.1 The Negative Control has generated a positive signal in the FAM channel:

- Contamination occurred during the set up. Results from the entire run cannot be relied upon as accurate.
- Repeat the entire run taking great care when adding the templates, in particular, the Positive Control (Tube 4), to ensure that cross-contamination does not occur.
- Make sure that the work area and instruments are properly decontaminated before and after use.
- The Negative Ct was incorrectly positioned in the instrument.
- Take care that the reaction tubes are placed in their designated sites OR that wells are annotated correctly within the software.
- Non-recommended tubes or plates were used.
- Thresholds are only valid when using the recommended Starlab tubes with caps (Cat # A1402-3700).

4.2 The Negative Control IAC Ct value is not within the acceptable range:

- The PCR has been inhibited.
- Ensure that the work area and instruments are thoroughly dry after the use of decontaminating agents prior to PCR set up.
- The storage conditions of the kit did not comply with the instructions in the Storage section of this IFU, or the kit has expired.
- Please check correct storage conditions of the kit have been followed. Check the expiry date of the reagents (see the kit box / pouch label) and repeat with unexpired kit if necessary.
- Either Tube 1 or 2 reagent was not added to the PCR reaction, or double the amount of Tube 2 was added.
- Repeat the run taking care in the set-up stage. Such errors can be detected by seeing higher or lower levels of liquid in one reaction tube compared to others.
- Non-recommended tubes or plates were used.
- Thresholds are only valid when using the recommended Starlab tubes with caps (Cat # A1402-3700).

4.3 The Positive Control is negative:

- The storage conditions of the kit did not comply with the instructions in the Storage section of this IFU, or the kit has expired.
- Please check correct storage conditions of the kit have been followed. Check the expiry date of the reagents (see the kit box / pouch label) and repeat with an unexpired kit if necessary.
- An error occurred during step 1.10 or 1.12 and the Positive Control template (Tube 4) was placed in the wrong reaction tube.
- Repeat the run, taking great care during the set-up stage. Such errors can be detected by seeing a higher level of liquid in one reaction, and a lower level in another, compared to normal.
- Either Tube 1 or 2 reagent was not added to the reaction.

- Repeat the run taking care in the set-up stage. Such errors can be detected by seeing lower levels of liquid in this reaction compared to others.
- The Positive Control was incorrectly positioned in the instrument.
- Take care that the reaction tubes are placed in their designated sites OR that wells are annotated correctly within the software.
- Non-recommended tubes or plates were used.
- Thresholds are only valid when using the recommended Starlab tubes with caps (Cat # A1402-3700).

4.4 Test sample(s) are negative and the IAC is out of range:

- It is likely that the extracted sample(s) contain PCR inhibitors.
- We recommend that DNA from samples is extracted using the MycXtra™ Fungal DNA Extraction kit.

4.5 There are no results for any channel with any samples or controls:

- The storage conditions of the kit did not comply with the instructions in the Storage section of this IFU, or the kit has expired.
- Please check correct storage conditions of the kit have been followed. Check the expiry date of the reagents (see the kit box / pouch label) and repeat with an unexpired kit if necessary.
- The equipment used is not functioning optimally.
- Please check that your Real-Time PCR instrument has an up-to-date service history and has been fully calibrated as described in its Installation and Maintenance Guide.
- An incorrect protocol file was used during the software set up.
- Please refer to Section 2 and choose the correct Protocol file, as specified for each software type/version, from the **Myconostica Protocol CD-ROM**. Only the file appropriate to the software can be loaded. Repeat the run using the correct protocol file.

If you have further questions, or you experience any problems, please contact Technical Support (mycotech@myconostica.co.uk)

Performance Characteristics and Limitations

Analytical Sensitivity

Using the Mx3000 series protocol described above, and PCR templates generated at Myconostica, the LoB for the MycAssay™ Aspergillus was determined to be a Ct of 37.0, while the LoD was determined to be <25 copies of target DNA, using the AF293 strain of *A. fumigatus*.

Analytical Specificity and Selectivity

The following claims were established using the Cepheid SmartCycler®.

Analytical specificity was tested using DNA extracted from 15 different Aspergilli species, including several strains each of *A. fumigatus*, *A. niger*, *A. terreus*, and *A. nidulans*. Signals detected above the LoB were recorded as a positive result.

All of the 15 *Aspergillus* spp. tested were positive with the assay. In addition to those previously mentioned, this includes *A. flavus*, *A. versicolor*, *A. glaucus*, *A. sclerotiorum*, *A. niveus*, *A. lentulus*, *A. unguis*, *A. candidus*, *A. wentii*, *A. tubingensis* and *A. foetidus*.

Genomic DNA extracted from *Penicillium* spp. also generated positive results. This is due to the fact that the sequences of the molecular targets are highly conserved between *Aspergillus* and *Penicillium*. Therefore, it must be noted that a positive result with this assay may be the result of *Penicillium*, rather than *Aspergillus*.

Analytical selectivity was tested using DNA extracted from a variety of different fungal and non-fungal species. The following species did not report out a positive result; *Alternaria alternata* *Blastomyces capitatus*, *Candida albicans*, *C. glabrata*, *C. parapsilosis*, *C. tropicalis*, *Cladosporium* spp., *Cryptococcus neoformans*, *Doratomyces microsporus*, *Fusarium solani*, *Histoplasma capsulatum* *Pneumocystis jirovecii*, *Rhizomucor pusillus*, *Rhodotonia rubra*, *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, *Scedosporium apiosperinu*, *S. prolificans*, *Sporothrix schenkii*, *Trichosporon capitatu*. The following bacterial species did not report a positive result; *Bordetella pertussi*, *Corynebacterium diphtheriae*, *Escherichia coli*, *Haemophilus influenza*, *Lactobacillus plantarum*, *Legionella pneumophila* *Moraxella catarrhalis*, *Mycoplasma pneumonia*, *Neisseria meningitides*, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Streptococcus pneumonia*, *S. pyogenes*, *S. salivarius*.

LICENSING

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