PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

IUDs (Intrauterine Devices) are no longer acceptable specimens for anaerobic culture for *Actinomyces* and will be rejected.

*Actinomyces* is considered normal flora in the vagina and can colonize the strings of IUDs without causing infections in the uterus. Growth of *Actinomyces* from IUDs does not necessarily indicate infection, especially in an asymptomatic patient.

If patients are symptomatic and infection with *Actinomyces* is suspected, culture of tissue or invasively/surgically collected pus sent for anaerobic culture and/or surgical pathology specimens are recommended. Culture is difficult and only confirms diagnosis in approximately half of cases due to strict anaerobic requirements, delays in transport to the laboratory, and inappropriate collection. Swabs are unacceptable and will be rejected.