4. **Y. pestis:**

   Gram Stain: Gram negative bacilli (1.0 by 0.5 µm) that may exhibit bipolar staining
   Culture: SBA - gray-white to slightly yellow opaque colonies after 48 hrs incubation; Beyond 48 to 72 hrs incubation, colonies develop fried egg appearance. Little or no hemolysis.
   MAC - small, lactose negative colonies after 24 hrs incubation.

Identify these isolates following standard laboratory procedures for gram negative bacilli including oxidase, Vitek card, API, or other tests as appropriate.

If a presumptive diagnosis of *Y. pestis*, proceed as outlined under "Reporting" below. Otherwise, report as noted elsewhere in the manual for gram negative bacilli.

## III. REPORTING

If any of the above organisms is presumptively identified, proceed as follows:

1. Notify the medical microbiologist on call immediately.
2. Prepare a subculture of the organism on Trypticase soy agar (TSA) for shipping to the Central Public Health Lab.
3. Notify the Central Public Health Lab [During Business Hours: Dr. Frances Jamieson (416) 235-5712 or Dr. Margaret Fearon (416) 235-5725; After Hours: Call the Duty Officer (416) 605-3113 ] that an isolate will be sent for further identification.
4. Do not report the presumptive result in the LIS until further instructions from the microbiologist.
5. If a presumptive *B. anthracis* colony is identified and suspected as a bioterrorist threat agent: Preserve original specimens pursuant to a potential criminal investigation.
6. The medical microbiologist will:
   i) Contact the treating physician to review the case.
   ii) Notify the senior hospital administrator on call.
   iii) Notify the Infection Control Department.
   iv) Notify Toronto Public Health:
      • During business hours: Tel: (416) 392-7411
      • After hours: Tel: (416) 690-2142
IV. **PACKAGING AND TRANSPORTING PROTOCOL**

- Suspected isolates will be packaged for transport to PHL according to the Transportation of Dangerous Goods regulation. Staff certified for transportation of dangerous goods will do the packaging.
- Inform Microbiologist to arrange for special courier (either special courier from PHL or lab personnel to drive to PHL)

V. **REFERENCES**


4. CDC Guidelines for State Health Departments (Revised October 14, 2001)

5. CDC Basic protocol for the presumptive identification of Bacillus anthracis