Gloved Fingertip & Thumb Sampling

**Documentation of competence is required initially and again every 12 months.**
Initial competency requires completing the gloved fingertip and thumb sampling no fewer than 3 separate times. Each fingertip and thumb evaluation must occur after performing separate and complete hand hygiene and garbing procedures.

1. **Prepare**
   - You will need two sampling devices containing general microbial growth agar.
   - Label each sampling device with a personnel identifier, whether the sample is from the right or left hand, and the date and time of sampling.

2. **Clean**
   - Perform USP 797-mandated hand hygiene and garbing procedures.
   - **Do not** apply 70% isopropyl alcohol (IPA) to gloves immediately before touching the sampling device. This could cause a false-negative result.

3. **Collect**
   - Hold the device upside down with one hand. With the opposite hand, remove the lid. Bring the opposite hand up and roll all fingers and thumb over the agar surface.
   - Use a separate sampling device for each hand to collect samples from all gloved fingers and thumbs.

4. **Incubate**
   - Place the sampling devices in an incubator during two separate periods:
     1. 30°-35°C/86-95°F for no less than 48 hours, then
     2. 20°-25°C/68°-77°F for at least 5 additional days

5. **Count**
   - Count and record the total number of colony-forming units (CFUs) on both sampling devices after final incubation.
   - **Total action levels required for passing:**
     - Initial sampling: 0 CFUs
     - Subsequent samplings: <3 CFUs

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