

## A MODIFIED TECHNIQUE FOR STAINING LEPROSY BACILLI IN SMEARS

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The following method of acidfast staining of *M. leprae* has the advantage of timed decolourising, and so gives consistent results.

### **Method**

All staining is carried out in Coplin jars.

- (a) Flame fix.
- (b) Stain with Ziehl-Neelsen stain at room temperature for 20 minutes.
- (c) Wipe stain from the back of the slides and wash in tap water.
- (d) Decolourise in 5% sulphuric acid for five minutes.
- (e) Wash well in running water.
- (f) Counterstain with 0.1% toluidin blue for one minute. Wipe off any excess stain from the back of the slide and blot dry.

Methylene blue 0.1% may be used instead of toluidin blue. The author prefers the latter as it gives a clearer background.

This method has now been in used in this Research Centre for the last ten months, with excellent and consistent results.

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