

Optimice SOP - Flat Filter Media Removal for Testing

Introduction

The flat filter assembly consists of a filter medium, which is sandwiched between two layers of stainless mesh. A blue and white plastic retaining clip holds the three layers in place.

Animal Care Systems sells a tool to remove the retaining clip (Figure 1); however, a standard two-position pair of slip-joint pliers is sufficient. Use the pliers' wide setting.



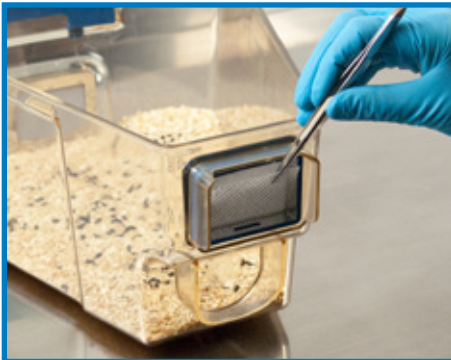
Figure 1

Removal

1. Remove filter medium before emptying cages.
2. Grip the plastic retaining clip by the release hoops.
3. Squeeze gently and pull until the clip releases. A small amount of pressure is necessary; maximizing pressure makes removal more difficult.



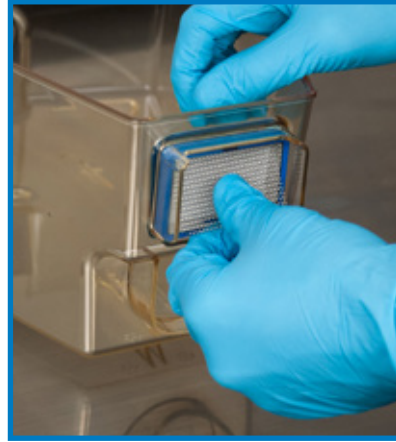
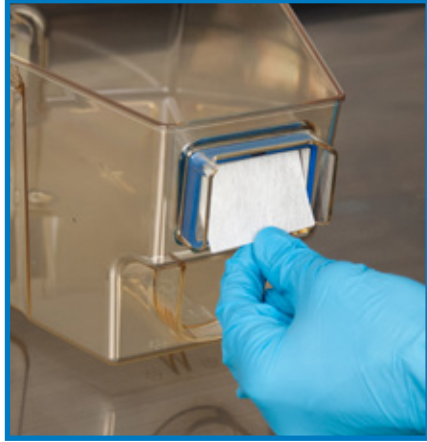
4. Press gently on the stack of filter components from the inside of the cage base, and remove the outer, coarser stainless mesh with forceps.
5. Remove Reemay medium with decontaminated forceps, and place into a Falcon or centrifuge tube with the cage-facing side of the filter toward the tube interior. Debris can then be easily eluted from filter surface.



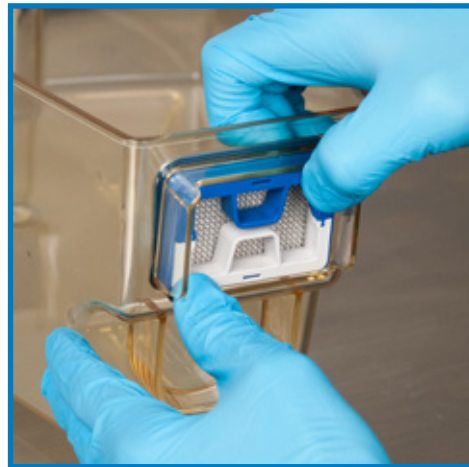
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Reinstallation

1. Place a new Reemay medium down onto the fine stainless mesh, and then replace the coarse stainless mesh on top of it. **The fine stainless mesh must face the interior of the cage.** Reemay medium damage will result if the mesh positions are reversed.



2. Position the retaining clip straight and even into the filter frame, and then press evenly against the retaining clip on the opposing corners or on the center of the top and bottom edges until it locks into place. There is an audible snap that signifies the clip is secure.



Media Submission

When collecting filters, avoid cross-contamination, and store tubes in a container to minimize contamination of the tubes with filters. Store samples at -4°F (-20°C) in a **non-defrosting** freezer. Temperature fluctuations in frost-free freezers may degrade filter samples over time.