



Video transcript

How to Preserve Sponges

Robert W. Thacker

- In this video, we will preserve sponges using 95% ethanol.
- If you need to use another fixative, like formaldehyde, please see our website for other protocols.
- So here are two sponges that we will fix today, and we need to place these in 95% ethanol.
- To do that, you will need some ethanol, we need labels to go inside the containers, and these labels need to be solvent-resistant.
- If I'll need some containers, I like using these 50 mil tubes.
- The first thing to do is to put a label in each tube.
- And you want this label to be a unique combination of your initials and specimen number.
- And for each tube we need to make a label to go inside the tube.
- You might want to add other information on the label, like who collected the specimen, where it was collected and the date.
- Put the label inside the tube, just in case the exterior label wears off.
- And now we can prepare each sponge piece to go inside the tubes.
- This is a large specimen, I need to cut it so it fits in the tube.
- If the sponge is too big, you might want to cut it down the middle, just to make sure that the ethanol can penetrate these sponges.
- Then just add enough ethanol to cover the sponge.
- And whatever container you are using, you want to use twice as much volume of ethanol as you have volume of sponge.
- You might see some pigment leach out of the sponge.
- In this case, it is good to note the color of the pigment, as it can be useful for identification.
- After 12 to 24 hours, replace the ethanol with fresh ethanol, this will improve the fixation.
- These preserved materials can be stored at room temperature or in a fridge.

