

Disposable Cell Counter Slides – What do you do?

Do you clean new disposable slides before analysis? – it will improve your analytical reliability.

Do you wash disposable slides under the tap to save money? - this will not work.

Do you know how much you spend on slides each year? – you could reduce running costs by 90%.

Do you follow company guidelines on sustainability? - you can now.

Cleaning new slides

Cleaning new disposable slides prior to analysis is essential to avoid manufacturing contamination which may be as high as 40% in some designs. Sadly very few scientists actually check for this and therefore the results produced must be questionable. It takes less than 30 seconds to clean and dry a new slide so why take the risk?

Slide washing in running water

Washing automated cell counting slides under running water is not recommended due to a number of detrimental effects on the slides and subsequent analyses as listed below.

1. Washing slides under running water **DOES NOT** remove all of the cells from the slide
2. Water irreversibly damages the internal coating of the slides making them impossible to re-use again.
3. This practice exposes the user to biohazards as there is an increased risk of contaminated water splashing around the sink and onto the user. There is also a risk to the environment if live cells are disposed of down the drain.
4. The slides take a long time to dry.
5. Manual washing introduces user related biases.
6. Any data produced is not reliable

The ideal solution is to use an **iWash®** system as it gently cleans and reconditions the slide chamber before drying to ensure high reproducibility of measurement for many run cycles. The total wash and dry cycle is less than 30 seconds per slide. The wash procedure removes all of the culture sample out of the cavity, whilst simultaneously lysing all cells as well as deactivating any biohazardous organisms present, making the waste safe for disposal using standard drainage systems. Incorrect results or repeat analysis will actually cost you more than any perceived saving.

Cost of analysis

A typical, productive lab may be disposing of anywhere between 500-1000 slides per month. With each slide costing between £0.75-£1.20. This will equate to a monthly consumables spend of £375 to £1200. On top of this there is the cost of logistics plus disposal. Therefore, a return on investment may be achieved in as little as 3 months and will continue for the lifetime of the iWash®. Over a 10 year period this will equate to many thousands of pounds. By allowing the user to recycle slides up to 50 times, the iWash allows at least £50 of research to be performed for every £1 spent on plastic slides. It would be worth calculating your savings per year as it may be more than you think.

Sustainability

Most companies now have a sustainability policy which is to be encouraged although at times it is difficult to know how to implement changes in line with the policy. Automated cell counters are known to be wasteful due to the nature of their design. It is also tempting to use what appears convenient at the expense of good science and the environment even if it costs significantly more than practical alternatives.

If your institute is serious about sustainability, improving your cell counting capabilities and reducing costs then you should consider the **iWash®** which is the perfect solution to the above issues. Using iWash®, which easily fits into your workflow, will improve your analytical reliability, minimise your environmental impact and save you thousands of pounds.



iCount
iWash®
iReCycle

- Reduce plastic waste during cell counting
- Slash disposable slide costs
- Make your lab greener

“The iWash® Slide Cleaner is a sustainability breakthrough in lab consumable usage. Instead of using hundreds of slides a week we are now using only a few. This means savings in cost and helping to save the planet. The slides come completely clean after washing and are like new, so there is no adverse effect on data at all.”

Haemato-Oncology Laboratory Manager

The innovative iWash® Slide Cleaner has integrated into our cell culture workflow seamlessly; it is easy to use and adopted well by researchers. There is minimal maintenance, uses minimal bench space and helps towards our sustainable targets. The cost benefits by reusing slides allows our funding to go further, as well as being eco-friendly”

Principal Laboratory Manager

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