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Front cover illustration

The rapidly disappearing art of chlamydial isolation in cell culture. Iodine staining of inclusions from Chlamydia trachomatis strain Sweden 3 (wild-type). The routine laboratory skill of isolating C. trachomatis is being lost because of the use of nucleic acid amplification tests. Iodine staining was originally used for rapid screening of coverslip cultures. The technique relies upon the production of a glycogen matrix within the developing inclusion. Chlamydial inclusions appear as dark brown granular bodies against a lighter cellular background. The synthesis of glycogen is linked to the presence of a highly conserved functional plasmid. Image courtesy Lesley T. Cutcliffe and Ian N. Clarke, University of Southampton. See the paper by Unemo et al. in this issue, pp. 1394–1404.
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