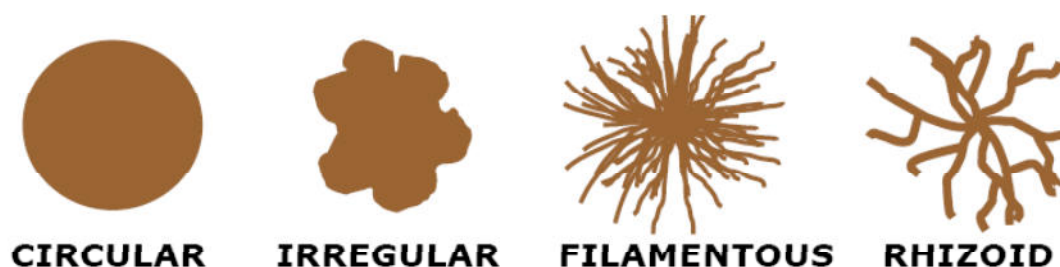


Colony Morphology

Principles of Microbiology, defined the practice as “The examination of plate cultures. determining the character of the different colonies, their action upon the medium, the rapidity of their development, and in case of quantitative analysis, the number and variety of colonies”. This practice remains consistent. Many different terms have been used to classify colonies themselves. Distinguishing colony morphology is one of the first skills taught to microbiology students. It will be useful to learn the terminology used for describing common colony types. The following outline will be helpful for verbally communicating the appearance of observed colonial growth.

1. Form – The form refers to the shape of the colony. These forms represent the most common colony shapes you are likely to encounter.



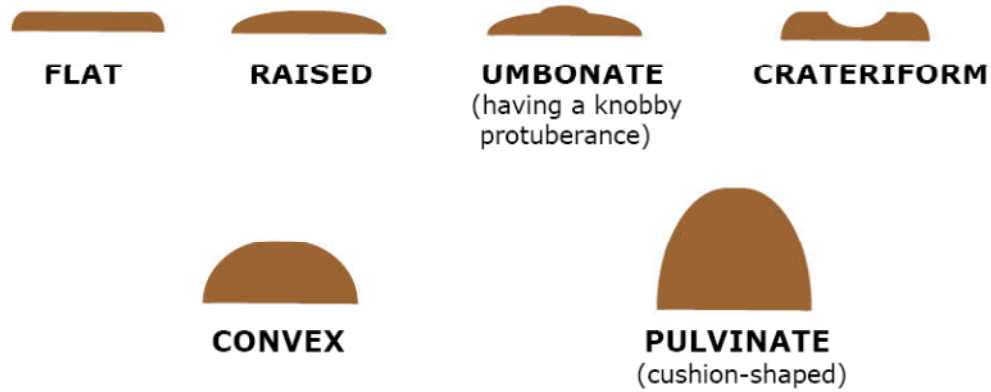
a. Size – The size of the colony can be a useful characteristic for identification. The diameter of a representative colony may be measured. Tiny colonies are referred to as **punctiform**.

b. Surface – Bacterial colonies are frequently shiny and smooth in appearance. Other surface descriptions might be: **veined, rough, dull, wrinkled (or shriveled), glistening**.

c. Texture – Several terms that may be appropriate for describing the texture or consistency of bacterial growth are: **dry, moist, mucoid, brittle, viscous, butyrous (buttery)**.

d. Color – It is important to describe the color or pigment of the colony. Also include descriptive terms for any other relevant optical characteristics such as: **opaque, cloudy, translucent, iridescent**.

2. Elevation – This describes the “side view” of a colony. These are the most common



3. Margin – The margin or edge of a colony (or any growth) may be an important characteristic in identifying an organisms. Several examples are shown below.

