

Clostridium Difficile Infection Stool Collection Algorithm

For calendar day 4 or later of admission

Note: For calendar Day 1 – 3 specimen should be sent ASAP after admission if patient presents with diarrhea



Patient has liquid, loose or watery stool (i.e. forms to the shape of the cup) 3 or more times over 24 hours (No formed stools should be sent)

↓ YES

If febrile and/or has abdominal pain

↓ YES

Place patient on C-Diff Precautions until results received



Has patient taken laxatives, stool softeners, bowel prep, lactulose, or other medication to induce stool in past 24 hours? Was tube feed initiated in past 24 to 48 hours?

↓ NO

Complete lab requisition and send specimen. Continue contact precautions until results.



Is specimen positive for C-Diff?



Yes →

NO →



NO

↓ No

Observe for 24 hours for persistence of symptoms. Do not order test for C-Diff, do not isolate.

→ YES



Notify physician and obtain order to hold stool inducing medications and/or tube feed for 24 hours. Continue contact precautions.

↓ YES

Do not send specimen. D/C isolation and obtain order to D/C test.

Determine underlying cause of loose stools and stop C-Diff isolation precautions.

Continue ordered treatment and keep patient in C-diff isolation precautions. Do not send follow up test for C-Diff.

*Liquid stool alone is not a singular indication for C-Diff. It is important to consider the clinical presentation of additional risk factors: antibiotic therapy in the last 45 days, hospitalization in the last 30 days, nursing home residency, currently taking medications to reduce stomach acid (proton pump inhibitors), and a history of C-diff.

Indeterminate tests will automatically be PCR tested. Do not retest for cure.