



CONWAY MEDICAL CENTER

PROCEDURE

When in hard copy form, refer to Policy Manager to validate this as the most current revision.

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| TITLE: | LAB-SPC-05.08 Stool Specimen Collection -PRO | | |
| ISSUED BY: | Sr Tech, Microbiology | REFERENCE #: | LAB-SPC-05.08-PRO |
| APPROVED BY: | Lab Director | EFFECTIVE DATE: | 2000-11-15 |

SCOPE: All potential submitters of stool samples to CMC for testing.

PROCEDURE:

I. Procedures Performed on Fecal Specimens:

- A. Routine Culture: *Salmonella spp*, *Shigella spp*, *Campylobacter spp.*, *E. coli 0157:H7* and *Yersinia sp.* are the pathogens routinely examined for. *P. aeruginosa*, *S. aureus*, and yeast growing predominantly will also be reported.
- B. *Clostridium difficile*
- C. *Giardia lamblia*/ *Cryptosporidium*
- D. Occult blood
- E. Fecal Lactoferrin (Stool for WBC)
- F. O & P
- G. *H. pylori* Antigen

II. Specimen Collection and Handling:

- A. Collect prior to antibiotic therapy and the administration of bismuth, barium, magnesium, mineral oil, or gall bladder dye. The general waiting period necessary to allow these substances to clear is 7 days; for gallbladder dye, however, 21 days may be required.
- B. Collect the specimen in a clean wide-mouth jar or place it in a sterile container.
- C. Stools should be transported to the lab within one hour of collection. If a delay is unavoidable, specimens should be promptly refrigerated, stools for *Giardia*/*Crypto*. should be put into 10% formalin ASAP once received in the lab.
- D. Do not contaminate with urine.
- E. Swabs are acceptable for culture only.
- F. A minimum of 1-2 grams of stool is required for any stool procedure, however 5 grams of stool is required for O&P.
- G. If the patient is a neonate/toddler, place a diaper inside out on the child (plastic side towards child). Transfer the specimen to a clean container on the unit.

NOTE: SPECIMENS IN DIAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED IN THE MICRO. DEPARTMENT

- H. For further information on storage requirements. See collections manual.



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- I. Outpatients should deliver stools to lab ASAP, but if delay is unavoidable specimens may be refrigerated until delivery. Delivery to lab must be within 1 hour upon removal from refrigerator. Document in computer.

III. Guidelines for Bacteriology:

- A. Do not accept stool bacteriology specimens from inpatients after the **third** hospital day.
- B. Do not accept multiple stools collected on the same day for the same test, without discussing with the physician.
- C. Do not accept stools more than 1 hour old if left at room temperature.
- D. Stools should be tested for C. difficile toxin for all patients over 6 months of age with clinically significant diarrhea and a history of antibiotic exposure. Consider C. difficile testing as an alternative to routine microbiology studies for inpatients over 6 months of age who have test request for routine enteric pathogens.
- E. Dry, formed stools should not be processed for C. difficile.
- F. Do not accept more than two stools for culture per patient per admission.

IV. Guidelines for Parasitology:

- A. Do not accept more than 3 stool specimens for O&P without consulting the physician. (One stool per alternate days is preferable).
- B. Do not accept specimens for O&P on inpatients who have been hospitalized for more than 3 days.
- C. Stools should be submitted over 7-10 days, because shedding may be intermittent. Sampling too close together may occur at a low point in the cycle and the organism may be missed.

Note: Physicians are strongly encouraged to submit fecal specimens according to the above collection criteria. Deviation from these criteria will be on a case-by-case basis and will require specific instructions from the ordering physician.

V. References:

- A. The Stool Pigeon; Excerpts from Diagnostic Parasitology Options Related to Collection, Processing, and Testing. Issue 24, 2000.
- B. Manual of Clinical Microbiology, 9th edition, Murray, 2007
- C. Clinical Microbiology Pocket Guide, 2nd edition, Murray, 1998
- D. The Use and Abuse of Routine Stool Microbiology; Arch. Path. Lab. Medicine, vol. 120, 2/96; P. Valenstein et al
- E. Clostridium Difficile-Associated Diarrhea and Colitis, Shea Position Paper, Infection Control and Hospital Epidemiology, Vol. 16, No.8

RECORDS: NA

REFERENCE STANDARDS: CAP GEN.40000; GEN40016; GEN.40032; GEN.40050; GEN.40100



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REVISION/REVIEW HISTORY:

| Date | Affected Section(s) | Summary of Changes ('Reviewed' or details of change) |
|-------------------|---------------------|---|
| 05/17/2011 mp | None | Review/Revisions saved electronically in Lab G drive |
| 11/03/2011 lds | Format | Changed to MCN policy manager format. |
| 04/01/13mp | Format | Roman Numeral and newest MCN.(lds) No content changes |
| 03/12/15mp | All | Reviewed. No changes. |
| 03/14/17mp | All | Reviewed. No changes |