

C. difficile Protocol Quick Look Guide

Admission Days 1-3 (Community Onset) --Goal is to increase early detection

1. Assess

- Nurses will complete the C. diff screening in Epic every 12 hours x 6 answering “yes” to the first question then proceed to answer questions about stool pattern.
- Assess and accurately document stool frequency and appearance.

2. Test

- Patients with 3 or more diarrheal stools in 24 hours during admission **days 1-3 will be tested for C. diff per standing order.**
- Appropriately labeled diarrheal stool samples (take the shape of the container) shall be transported to the Clinical Laboratory within 30 minutes of obtaining the specimen.
- The Clinical Laboratory shall immediately notify appropriate clinical colleagues about patients with a positive C. diff result.

3. Isolate

- Patients with diarrhea and/or abdominal symptoms suggestive of C. diff will be placed in Special Contact Isolation.
- Patients may be removed from Special Contact Precautions if they do not have a loose stool for 48 hours after admission and are asymptomatic for C. diff.
- If a patient continues with diarrhea and C. diff and other infectious diarrheal illnesses have been ruled out (Norovirus, Salmonella, Shigella, Campylobacter) the patient may be removed from precautions.
- Patients diagnosed with C. diff will continue in precautions until discharge.

Admission Day 4-Discharge (Hospital Onset) --Goal is to decrease inappropriate testing

1. Assess

- Assess and accurately document stool pattern and abdominal assessment.
- Assess other etiologies that may be causing the diarrhea (i.e. stool softeners/laxatives, tube feedings, bowel prep, impaction with oozing stool, etc.) before sending a stool for testing.
- Assess for C. diff symptoms including abdominal pain/bloating, elevated WBC trend and fever trend.
- Contact Infection Prevention during office hours or Nursing Supervisor after hours with testing questions.

2. Test

- **A Healthcare Provider order is required** for a C. diff test on admission day 4 and after (no protocol).
- Patients with 3 or more diarrheal stools in 24 hours **and** signs of infection including abdominal pain, nausea, fever and elevated WBC during admission day 4 and after may be tested.
- Infection Preventionists may cancel tests on or after admission day 4 if testing criteria aren't met.
- Appropriately labeled diarrheal stool samples (take the shape of the container) shall be transported to the Clinical Laboratory within 30 minutes of obtaining the specimen.
- The Clinical Laboratory shall immediately notify appropriate clinical colleagues about patients with a positive C. diff result.

3. Isolate

- Patients with diarrhea and symptoms suggestive of C. diff on or after admission day 4 will be placed in Special Contact Precautions.
- Patients may be removed from Special Contact Precautions if they do not have a loose stool for 48 hours and are asymptomatic for C. diff.
- Patients diagnosed with C. diff will continue in precautions until discharge.