FAECES – Enteric Pathogen Laboratory Testing Guide

Severity & Public Health Risk Factors, Recommendations for Laboratory Testing

	Suggested First Line Tests			
	Enteric Bacterial Molecular	**Giardia / Crypto**	***C. difficile***	**Notes**
No Risk Factors	**No test**	**No test**	**No test**	
Risk Factors Recommended Testing				
Food Handler (PH)	✓			
Childcare attendance (PH)	✓	✓		
Rural[#] (PH)	✓	✓		
Raw seafood (PH)	✓			
Overseas travel (PH)	✓	✓		Countries visited (see ova, cysts & parasite risk factors)[¥]
Age <5 (S)	✓			
Age >70 (S)	✓			
Recent Antibiotics or Chemotherapy (S)			✓	
Recent Hospitalisation (S)			(✓)	Only if clinically indicated and specifically requested.
Inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) (S)	✓		(✓)	*C. difficile* only if clinically indicated and specifically requested.
Bloody diarrhoea (S)	✓			
Immunocompromised* (S)	✓	✓		
Persistent diarrhoea[§] (S)	✓	✓		
Public Health (PH), Severity (S)				

[#] *The **"Rural"** risk category includes patients who have been on **camping trips**, **farm visits**, those with **untreated water supply**.*

** The **immunocompromised** cohort includes those patients that are **pregnant**.*

[§] ***Persistent diarrhoea** is defined as diarrhoea of **at least one week** duration.*

Note: Samples for Public Health reasons will be tested, e.g. patients that are part of an "outbreak" cluster.

[¥] **Ova , Cysts and Parasite Risk Factors** (excluding Giardia & Cryptosporidium)

Particular risk factors or a specific travel history which puts patients at high risk of parasitic infection. These include the following:

- a prolonged stay (>3months) or recent residence in a tropical/endemic country e.g. seasonal workers, aid workers, volunteering
- contacts of known cases diagnosed with non-endemic enteric parasites
- unexplained eosinophilia following overseas travel
- paid requests (including for immigration/visa/insurance purposes)
- requests approved by a clinical microbiologist, infectious diseases physician or public health.

In all cases, brief clinical details must be given, including the country or area of exposure, duration of travel and any immunocompromising conditions.

References: https://lab.waikatodhb.health.nz/assets/Guidelines/DHB-Shared-Services-Laboratory-Test-Guidelines-2013.pdf pages 45 to 47.
https://bpac.org.nz/BT/2014/February/rural-infections.aspx
https://bpac.org.nz/antibiotics/guide.aspx

If no risk factors are detailed on the request form, then the specimen will be rejected.

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