



Stool antigen testing for *Helicobacter pylori*

We are receiving a lot of requests for stool antigen testing for *Helicobacter pylori* (*H. pylori*) where the test has been requested in conjunction with the molecular enteric panel for gastrointestinal pathogens. The clinical presentation of *H. pylori* infection is very different from that of infective gastroenteritis, so this should not be occurring. In addition, our assay for *H. pylori* antigen detection is neither recommended nor validated for unformed stool samples. A large proportion of our requests for *H. pylori* testing have no clinical details to support testing for this pathogen.

With this in mind, we plan to implement the following changes:

- Stool samples will only be processed for *H. pylori* testing when appropriate clinical details supporting the test are provided. Examples of acceptable clinical details may include any of the following:
 - Dyspeptic symptoms
 - Heartburn
 - Abdominal discomfort
 - Nausea/vomiting
 - Anorexia
 - Excessive belching/burping
 - "Gastritis"
 - Unintentional weight loss
 - History of peptic ulcers
 - Suspected, confirmed or family history of gastric carcinoma
 - Family history of *H. pylori* infection
 - Endoscopic evidence of ulceration
 - Monitoring of treatment of *H. pylori* infection
- Stool samples for *H. pylori* testing will **not** be accepted when requested in conjunction with the enteric PCR panel for infective gastroenteritis.

These changes will take effect from **Monday 3rd December 2018**.

If there are any questions with regards to the above, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

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CLINICAL UPDATE

Please ensure all members of your institution
receive a copy of this clinical update.