

Medical Center

In the tradition of the Medical College of Virginia

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Medical Staff

FROM: Betty A. Forbes, Ph.D., D(ABMM)
Director, Clinical Microbiology Laboratory

Richard A. McPherson, M.D.
Chair, Division of Clinical Pathology

DATE: September 10, 2008

RE: Change in parasitology ordering on stool specimen

In the past, clinical microbiology laboratories have routinely provided either traditional ova and parasitic examinations (concentration and microscopic examination of permanently-stained smears) or detection for either *Giardia lamblia* or *Cryptosporidium* spp. by direct fluorescent antibody (FA) assays or immunoassays on fecal specimens.

Based on in-house data and current published literature, the Clinical Microbiology Laboratory will no longer automatically perform microscopic examination of stool specimens for ova and parasites. Instead, all stool specimen requests will be handled as follows:

ACCEPTABLE SPECIMENS:

Stool in Para-Pak Collection Kit. (2 vials in kit: "Clean" vial [white cap] and SAF [sodium-acetate acid-formalin] vial [yellow cap])
Fresh stool-received within ≤ 1 hr.

ORDER: *Cryptosporidium* spp. and/or *Giardia* FA.

EXPECTED TURN-AROUND TIME: 24 hours.

POSSIBLE RESULTS:

1. FA Negative for *Cryptosporidium* spp. and/or *Giardia*. If symptoms persist and/or there is a travel history for which a parasitic infection is highly suspected, call the Clinical Microbiology Laboratory (628-4000) to request a routine ova and parasite examination.
2. FA Positive for *Cryptosporidium* spp. or *Giardia*.

It is still recommended to submit at least 3 stool specimens on separate days for testing since patients may exhibit symptoms and/or shed organisms intermittently.

Any questions regarding these changes, please call Dr. Forbes (828-3494 or beeper *60-6451).

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