

Laboratory Tests for *Clostridium difficile* Infection

Test	Substance detected	Time required	Sensitivity %	Specificity %	Concerns and comments
Cytotoxin	Toxin B	1-3 days	95	90-95	Long time required, technical demands; rarely used
Toxin culture	Toxigenic <i>C. difficile</i>	3-5 days	>95	80-90	Long time required, technical demands; rarely used in US
EIA toxin A or A/B	Toxin A or A/B	Hours	75-80	97-98	False-negative results, used by most US laboratories in 2008
EIA GDH	<i>C. difficile</i>	Hours	95-100	70-80	Some variations in reported sensitivity and nonspecificity
EIA GDH and toxin A/B	<i>C. difficile</i> and <i>C. difficile</i> toxin	Hours	95-100	97-98	Results depend on the toxin test
RT-PCR	Toxigenic <i>C. difficile</i>	Hours	>98	80-99	Nonspecificity attributed to carriers

NOTE. EIA, enzyme immunoassay; GDH, glutamine dehydrogenase; RT-PCR, reverse-transcriptase polymerase chain reaction.

Source: Bartlett, John G. Detection of *Clostridium difficile* Infection. *Infection Control and Hospital Epidemiology* 2010; 31(S 1):S35-S37.



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