

## Diarrhea Decision Tree

*The Diarrhea Decision Tree does not substitute for clinical assessment and judgment*

**DIARRHEA =  $\geq 3$  loose stools in  $\leq 24$  hours and concern for infectious diarrhea**

NO

YES

**Do not test  
Do not isolate**

**MD or RN order/initiate  
ENTERIC ISOLATION**

Has patient received laxative in previous 48 hours?

Is diarrhea likely due to laxative?

Yes

No

Discontinue laxative and observe X 24 hours  
Send C-difficile test earlier if strong clinical suspicion for C-difficile

Yes

No

Diarrhea persists

No

Yes

**Discontinue  
ENTERIC ISOLATION  
Remove Enteric Sign**

**Send ONE stool for C-difficile**

**\*Do not send C-difficile test for:**

1. Negative C-difficile test within 7 days
2. Known positive case (do not test for cure)

*Consider testing for other causes of infectious diarrhea if appropriate*

**Positive Result**

**Negative Result**

**Continue  
ENTERIC PRECAUTIONS  
for the duration of admission**

Yes

**If incontinent or  
diapered and concern for  
infectious diarrhea**

No

**Discontinue  
ENTERIC ISOLATION  
Remove Enteric Sign**

\* If further information is necessary contact:

- Infectious Diseases for clinical treatment consultation
- The Department of Epidemiology for questions related to isolation

Created: 2/2/2017

# Stool Consistency Chart with Acceptable Criteria for Clostridium difficile Testing



## Diarrhea (very liquid)

Acceptable specimen  
for diagnostic testing



## Diarrhea (semi-liquid)

Acceptable specimen  
for diagnostic testing



## Semi-solid (stool sample should take the shape of the container)

Acceptable specimen  
for diagnostic testing



## Formed

NOT acceptable specimen  
for diagnostic testing  
-specimen will NOT be tested and  
will be rejected

