



## MEMO

**TO:** All Regional Medical Laboratory Clients

**FROM:** Linda Strycker, MT(ASCP), Manager of Microbiology and  
Gerald C. Miller, Ph.D., Chief of Microbiology and Immunology

**DATE:** March 5, 2012

**SUBJECT:** *Clostridium difficile* Testing

Significant testing improvements have been made in the detection of *Clostridium difficile* disease, thus testing for ***Clostridium difficile* toxin by EIA will no longer be available at RML as of April 2, 2012.** All test requests for *C. difficile* will be **converted to the molecular test (C DIFF MOL)** which is **more sensitive and specific.** The CPT code for the new test is 87493. Please contact your RML Sales and Marketing representative regarding client and patient pricing.

The practice of testing three stools on three different days as was performed for EIA toxin testing is not recommended for the molecular test due to its increased sensitivity. A single stool specimen is all that is required for the new test. The molecular test targets the toxin producing portion of the gene, so repeat testing is not required. Current RML Microbiology policy is to reject repeat specimens including those received after a positive test for 4 days. These will be canceled as duplicate. If repeat testing is required due to worsening diarrhea or a change in antibiotic regimen, please contact the Microbiology Department.

The specimen requirement is liquid or soft stool (takes the shape of the container). If a formed stool specimen is submitted for testing, the Microbiology department will cancel testing as an inappropriate specimen.

The literature suggests that the ***C. difficile* molecular test can detect *C. difficile* DNA up to 90 days following successful treatment;** therefore a "test of cure" cannot be performed.

Please contact Linda Strycker, MT(ASCP), Manager of Microbiology or Gerald C. Miller, Ph.D., Chief of Microbiology & Immunology at 918-744-2553 or 800-722-8077 with questions regarding *C. difficile* testing.