

Guidance to Providers: Isolation Policy with New 2-Stage Testing for *C. difficile* Infection

All patients for whom a *C. difficile* test is ordered are placed on empiric **Contact Precautions**.

- **(-)** If a test for *C. difficile* is ordered, and the patient is negative for *C. difficile* toxin gene by PCR (first part of the test) and an alternative diagnosis for the diarrheal symptoms is documented by the patient's provider, then Contact Precautions may be discontinued.
- **(+, -)** If a test for *C. difficile* is ordered, and the patient is positive for *C. difficile* toxin gene by PCR (first part of the test), **BUT** negative for *C. difficile* toxin by antigen detection (second part of the test), the following guidelines apply for removing contact isolation precautions:
 1. The patient remains on contact isolation until the patient returns to his/her normal stooling pattern for minimum of 48 hours.
 2. Discharge or transfer from room so that all surfaces in room may be cleaned thoroughly
 - a. Patient must be bathed,
 - b. Place patient in a clean gown, and
 - c. Place patient in a clean bed if transferred to a new room
 3. **NOTE: A negative test is NOT required (and should not performed) for removal from isolation.**
- **(+, +)** If a patient is positive for *C. difficile* toxin gene by PCR, **AND** positive for *C. difficile* toxin by antigen detection, the patient can be removed from contact isolation per current VUMC guidelines as outlined below:
 1. The patient remains on contact isolation until the patient returns to his/her normal stooling pattern for minimum of 48 hours **AND**
 2. Patient is off of *C. difficile*-specific treatment
 3. Discharge or transfer from room so that all surfaces in room may be cleaned thoroughly
 - a. Patient must be bathed,
 - b. Place patient in a clean gown, and
 - c. Place patient in a clean bed if transferred to a new room
 4. **NOTE: A negative test is NOT required (and should not performed) for removal from isolation.**