

GIARDIA/CRYPTOSPORIDIUM (GCR) ANTIGEN TEST (STOOL)

I. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Giardia (lamblia) intestinalis and *Cryptosporidium* species are the two most commonly identified intestinal parasites in stool samples submitted to the Microbiology lab at. The GCR antigen test is more sensitive than a standard Ova and Parasite (O&P) exam for detection of these pathogens. *Cryptosporidium* cannot be detected by O&P. In addition, the GCR antigen test does not require the presence of intact organisms for detection and thus multiple stool samples are not commonly required.

II. SPECIMEN COLLECTION:

- (1) A patient with no recent history of travel outside the U.S. and no previous GCR testing should have a single stool sample submitted for GCR antigen testing. Continuing symptoms with a single negative GCR test may warrant testing a second sample. A patient who is a recent immigrant or with a history of travel outside the U.S., or a patient with continuing symptoms after screen testing by GCR, should have an O&P exam. See Ova and Parasite Exam procedure.
- (2) All specimens collected in the home or physician office must be placed in a Total-fix (white cap) fixative vial or in a 10% Formalin (pink) fixative vial for GCR Exam. Contact Laboratory Services at (800) 934-6575 and they will supply you with Total-fix vials. An O&P exam can also be performed on the Total-fix vial or on the Formalin (pink) vial (with the addition of a blue PVA vial). See O&P procedure.
- (3) Specimens are held one week after running the test in case a follow-up O&P exam is requested.
- (4) In addition to patient identification, the sample should be labeled with collection time, and consistency of the original specimen.

