

Health Care Provider Bulletin

CHANGES TO OVA & PARASITE TESTING

Dear Health Care Providers,

While ordering Stool Ova & Parasites testing, if helminthic infestation is suspected, immunocompromised status or for immigration/refugee screening purposes please collect stool samples in SAF containers and provide relevant clinical information or clearly mark 'Microscopy' in the test requisition, so that SAF specimens can be directed to appropriate testing.

Recommended specimen for Stool Ova & Parasite Microscopy is stool collected in 'SAF fixative, and recommended specimen for Stool Parasite PCR is stool collected in 'Copan Fecal Swab'. However, beginning August 2023, at LifeLabs ON, stool specimens collected in SAF preservative with the test order 'Stool Ova & Parasite' are being tested for common protozoan pathogens by PCR, instead of Microscopy, for higher sensitivity and faster turnaround time. Test performance of Stool Parasite PCR assay on SAF stool specimens has been established and validated at LifeLabs.

Stool Parasite PCR Assay only detects the following protozoan pathogens: *Blastocystis hominis*, *Cryptosporidium spp.*, *Cyclospora cayetanensis*, *Dientamoeba fragilis*, *Entamoeba histolytica*, and *Giardia duodenalis*. Therefore, testing for any additional parasites including helminths must be directed to Microscopy. **SAF stool specimens received in the laboratory without specific indications for 'Microscopy' in the test requisition, will be tested by PCR testing for common protozoan pathogens only.**

For any questions, please contact LifeLabs Customer Care Center 1-877-849-3637.

Thank you,

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