

# do one thing *differently*

*Simple Strategies to Prevent C. diff*

## *Do You Know When to Test for C. diff?*

Rapid confirmation of a *Clostridioides difficile* (*C. diff*) diagnosis ensures patients receive prompt treatment and expedites contact precautions to prevent the spread of infection. Initiate testing using the following criteria:

1. Three or more unexplained diarrhea stools within 24 hours
2. No laxative use
3. Stool takes the form of the container; not formed (Bristol stool type 6-7)

## *Share These Tools & Resources with Your Team*

1. Bristol Stool Form Scale, [bit.ly/2ZF6B6d](http://bit.ly/2ZF6B6d)
2. IDSA Guidelines, <https://bit.ly/3sP8yOt>
3. AHRQ Toolkit for Reduction of *Clostridium difficile* Infections Through Antimicrobial Stewardship: [bit.ly/2VcdCyE](http://bit.ly/2VcdCyE)

## *Watch for These C. diff Symptoms*

1. Watery diarrhea
2. Nausea
3. Abdominal pain/tenderness
4. Loss of appetite
5. Fever

## *Did You Know?*

*C. diff* spores are transferred to patients mainly via the hands of health care personnel who have touched a contaminated surface or item. Wash Your Hands!

## *Best Practices for Testing*

1. Do not test unless symptoms are present.
2. Do not test for cure.
3. No repeat or duplicate testing.
4. Before testing a sample for *C. diff*, consider other causes of loose stools.
5. If you send a stool specimen, implement preemptive contact isolation.
6. Transport specimens promptly and store in refrigerator until tested.
7. Review testing protocols with your lab and medical director or infectious disease physician periodically.
8. Implement a nurse-to-provider communication tool such as SBAR.
9. Implement an alert or hard stop around *C. diff* testing when laxatives are used.