



# Memorandum

**Date:** September 13, 2016  
**To:** Calgary Zone Physicians & Rural Physicians  
**From:** Microbiology, Calgary Laboratory Services  
**Re:** **Modification of Protozoal Screen**

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## Key Messages:

- Effective September 20, the stool Protozoal Screen will be performed by the *Cryptosporidium/Giardia* enzyme immunoassay (*Crypto/Giardia* EIA).
- PCR will be used for confirmation of EIA positive results and speciation of *Entamoeba histolytica*.

## Background:

- Prior to 2015, the Protozoal Screen was performed by *Cryptosporidium/Giardia* EIA.
- A PCR screen was introduced in 2015, detecting *Giardia*, *Cryptosporidium*, *E. histolytica* and *Dientamoeba fragilis*, however:
  - This PCR screen could not sustain higher-than-expected specimen volumes.
  - Recent literature (Clin Microbiol Infect. 2015 Jun;21(6):592) suggests that *Dientamoeba fragilis* is of questionable pathogenicity, and may be present in healthy controls as often as in those with diarrheal symptoms.

## Importance/Impact:

- Protozoal Screen will be directed toward two targets: *Giardia* and *Cryptosporidium*.
- *Entamoeba histolytica* and *Dientamoeba fragilis* will no longer be reported with the Protozoal Screen, but will continue to be identified when present on microscopy specimens.
- **Stool ova & protozoa microscopy is unaffected; the criteria for testing have not changed.**
- A case history form is mandatory for all stool for ova & parasite microscopy but not Protozoal Screen.  
<http://www.calgarylabservices.com/files/CLSForms/MI6011.pdf>

## Action Required:

- Specimens for both protozoal screen and microscopy must be submitted in the **stool ova & parasite collection kit (one vial with preservative and one vial without).** Both must be submitted.
- Refer to the attached stool ova and parasite testing flowchart, which is also available on the CLS website:  
<http://www.calgarylabservices.com/education-research/medical-professionals-education/medical-interpretation-guidelines/>

## Inquiries and feedback may be directed to:

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## STOOL OVA & PARASITE TESTING CRITERIA FLOW CHART

