

Bristol Stool Chart

Clostridium difficile Sub-Committee
Health Protection Surveillance Centre
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The SIGHT¹ mnemonic should be applied when managing patients with potentially infective diarrhoea

S	Suspect that a case may be infective where there is no clear alternative cause for diarrhoea
I	Isolate the patient. Consult with the infection prevention and control team (IPCT) where available while determining the cause of the diarrhoea
G	Gloves and aprons must be used for all contacts with the patient and their environment
H	Hand washing with soap and water should be carried out after each contact with the patient and the patient's environment
T	Test the stool for <i>C. difficile</i> toxin & other pathogens by sending a specimen immediately

** adapted from the SIGHT mnemonic UK protocol*

Ñ Management of *C. difficile* infection (CDI) is stratified by disease severity and summarised at <http://www.hpsc.ie/hpsc/A-Z/Gastroenteric/Clostridiumdifficile/Factsheets/File,3070,en.pdf>








The **Bristol Stool Scale or Bristol Stool Chart** is a medical aid designed to classify the form of human faeces into seven categories. Sometimes referred to in the UK as the "Meyers Scale", it was developed by Heaton at the University of Bristol and was first published in the Scandinavian Journal of Gastroenterology in 1997²

Ñ **Patients with CDI should be reviewed on a daily basis by the medical and nursing team for deterioration, monitoring bowel function using the Bristol Stool Chart. A sample stool chart is provided below.**

Sample form for monitoring bowel function

DATE	TIME	TYPE NO. (Type 6 & 7 are considered diarrhoea)	DESCRIPTION/COMMENTS (refer to chart)

Bristol Stool Chart

Type 1		Separate hard lumps, like nuts (hard to pass)
Type 2		Sausage-shaped but lumpy
Type 3		Like a sausage but with cracks on its surface
Type 4		Like a sausage or snake, smooth and soft
Type 5		Soft blobs with clear-cut edges (passed easily)
Type 6		Fluffy pieces with ragged edges, a mushy stool
Type 7		Watery, no solid pieces. Entirely Liquid

Reference

1. Department of Health, Health Protection Agency. *Clostridium difficile* infection: How to deal with the problem. 2009
2. Heaton, K W & Lewis, S J 1997, 'Stool form scale as a useful guide to intestinal transit time'. *Scandinavian Journal of Gastroenterology*, vol.32, no.9, pp.920 - 924

