January 21, 2013

The microbiology department of Mercy Clinical Laboratory will begin reporting the presence of Klebsiella oxytoca in stool cultures when it is present in predominant amounts. Klebsiella oxytoca has been implicated in Antibiotic-Associated Hemorrhagic Colitis (AAHC). These patients present with bloody diarrhea during antibiotic therapy, often amoxicillin or amoxicillin/clavulanate. Colonoscopy typically shows mucosal edema and mucosal hemorrhage with no pseudomembranes. Testing for C. difficile toxin in these patients is negative, and unlike C. difficile infection, AAHC caused by Klebsiella oxytoca typically resolves solely with the discontinuation of antibiotic therapy, thus susceptibility testing will not be performed.

When a predominant amount of Klebsiella oxytoca is identified on a stool culture, it will be reported along with the following comment:

*Toxigenic strains of Klebsiella oxytoca have been reported to cause antibiotic-associated hemorrhagic colitis (AAHC) Patients usually respond to withdrawal of antimicrobials.*


Philbrick AM, Ernst ME. Amoxicillin-associated hemorrhagic colitis in the presence of *Klebsiella oxytoca*. Pharmacotherapy. 2007;27:1603-607

CACMLE teleconference #247, Update on the Enterobacteriaceae, Paul C. Schreckenberger, Ph.D., D(ABMM), 9/26/12