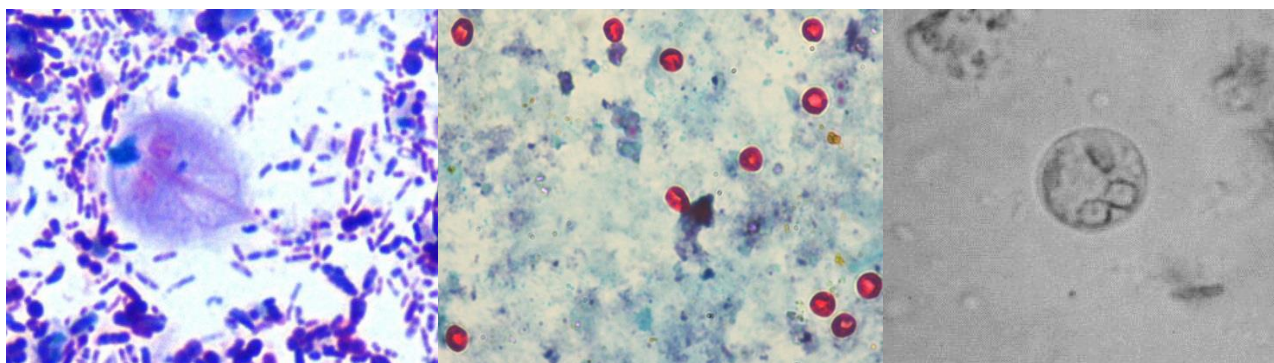


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Scheme for the Molecular Detection of Faecal parasites

The laboratory diagnosis of gastrointestinal parasites has traditionally been performed by microscopy. However, such procedures are time consuming and require highly specialized training plus experience. Antigen detection ELISAs can process large number of samples; however, their sensitivity can vary between various kits used. The emergence of molecular methodologies, especially RT-Multiplex PCR has enabled the detection of multiple faecal pathogens and mitigates the subjective nature of identifying parasites by morphology. Nucleic acid testing (NAT) has the potential to improve sensitivity and specificity rates and provide rapid and accurate diagnosis.

UK NEQAS Parasitology has established an EQA for molecular detection of faecal pathogens especially *Giardia*, *Cryptosporidium* and *E.histolytica* in the first instance.



Information regarding this scheme is as follows:

- The scheme is now LIVE with over 30 participating labs.
- Two distributions per year. Each distribution will contain 2 specimens.
- Different parasite densities will be used. *Giardia lamblia*, *Cryptosporidium*, *E.histolytica* and negatives will be included
- Specimens supplied as lyophilised (freeze-dried) faecal samples.
- Country specific performance will be available where there are more than 10 participants in a country.
- There will a three week period for participants reporting results. The intended results will appear on our web site www.ukneqasmicro.org.uk the day after the closing date and reports will normally be issued within 2 weeks.
- Working towards accreditation to ISO 17043:2010.

For further information, please contact the Scheme Manager at the above address or alternatively E-mail: organiser@ukneqasmicro.org.uk