Helicobacter pylori Diagnostic Algorithm

Legend
1. Breath test, stool antigen, histology with special staining for H pylori organisms, and/or culture are the gold standard tests for diagnosis of H pylori infection.
2. Mayo Medical Laboratories utilizes the POcone Infrared Spectrophotometer; performance characteristics for this instrument have not been established for persons under age 18.
3. According to the 2007 American College of Gastroenterologists guidelines, serology should be avoided in low prevalence populations or positive results should be confirmed with a test that identifies an active infection such as the urea breath test or stool antigen test.
4. Confirmation of eradication testing should not be ordered until 2 to 4 weeks after cessation of treatment. Proton pump inhibitors and antisecretory drugs should be discontinued for at least 1 week prior to assessment of H pylori eradication.
5. Culture is not routinely used for initial diagnosis of H pylori infection in the Mayo Clinic practice, but is required for antibiotic susceptibility testing if physicians suspect antibiotic resistance in patients who have previously failed therapy.

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