

Bacteriology

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A stool specimen should be sent for microbiological analysis when UC is suspected in order to exclude infective colitides, notably *Campylobacter*, which may be very difficult to distinguish from acute severe UC. *Clostridium difficile* colitis may need to be considered in populations at risk of this disease (see Chapter 77). Cytomegalovirus infection is a major pathogen in immunocompromised patients and can be difficult to distinguish from UC. Superimposed infection may precipitate fulminant colitis.

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