

Nucleotide sequence of Clostridium difficile toxin A

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Clostridium difficile produces two toxins, an enterotoxin called A and a cytotoxin B (1). Only after the enteral delivery of the enterotoxin A may the characteristic disease called Pseudomembranous Colitis be induced (2). Several attempts have been made to clone the *tox*A gene. Two groups have been able to isolate stable *tox*A fragments by expression cloning (3, 4). We here present the nucleotide sequence of the total *tox*A gene which is covered by the clones pCd122, pCd14 and pCd22 (5). Within the 9770 bp sequenced there are two open reading frames (ORF), one codes for a 16,124 Da polypeptide of unknown function, the second encodes toxin A. The toxin A ORF is 8130 bp long, the polypeptide deduced from this sequence has a molecular weight of 307,972 Da and a pK_i of 5.31. These data are in good agreement with the literature (6). The 3'-end of *tox*A consists of a 2499 bp repetitive structure. This part of toxin A is composed of five different oligopeptides which have already been presented and discussed (5, 7).

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