

increased (e.g., 37° C.) to release the bound glycoconjugate, which may be eluted in substantially pure form with a suitable buffer, e.g., 0.05M MOPS, 0.15M NaCl pH 8.0.

Toxin A may be used to detect the presence of the X, Y or I antigens in specimens of interest. In particular, toxin A may be utilized as a reagent in a histochemical assay to detect any of these antigens in thinly sliced sections of tissue. Such histochemical assay methods are known to those skilled in the art.

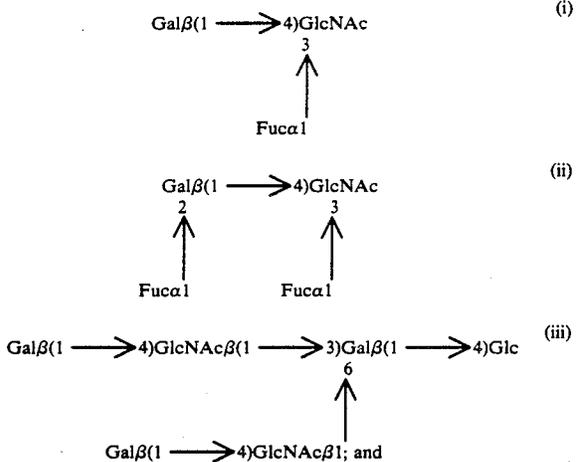
All references herein cited with respect to synthetic or analytical procedures are incorporated herein by reference.

The present invention may be embodied in other specific forms without departing from the spirit or essential attributes thereof and, accordingly, reference should be made to the appended claims, rather than to the foregoing specification, as indicating the scope of the invention.

We claim:

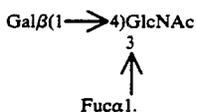
1. A method for detecting *Clostridium difficile* toxin A comprising:

(a) contacting a specimen with a reagent comprising one or more of the following terminal non-reducing structures

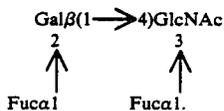


(b) assaying for binding of *Clostridium difficile* toxin A to the reagent.

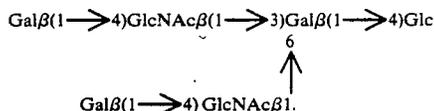
2. A method according to claim 1 wherein the reagent contains the structure



3. A method according to claim 2 wherein the reagent contains the structure



4. A method according to claim 1 wherein the reagent contains the structure



5. A method according to claim 1 wherein the reagent comprises the terminal non-reducing structure conjugated to a carrier.

6. A method according to claim 5 wherein the carrier comprises human serum albumin.

7. A method according to claim 1 wherein the assay means of step (b) is selected from the group consisting of enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay, latex agglutination, and crossed immunoelectrophoresis.

8. A method according to claim 1 comprising the steps of:

adhering said reagent to a solid support; incubating the adhered reagent with the specimen to immobilize the toxin A in the specimen thereto; contacting the immobilized toxin A with an enzyme-labelled anti-toxin A antibody and a substrate for the enzyme; and

determining the amount of toxin A in the specimen from the extent of enzymatic conversion of the substrate.

9. A method according to claim 1 comprising the steps of:

incubating the specimen with anti-toxin A antibody adhered to a solid support to immobilize the toxin A contained therein;

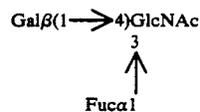
incubating the immobilized toxin A with a reagent comprising said terminal non-reducing structure linked to a carrier;

contacting the immobilized toxin A with an enzyme-labelled antibody to the carrier and a substrate for the enzyme; and

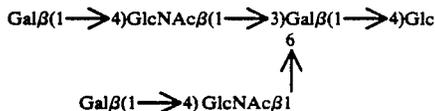
determining the amount of toxin A in the specimen from the extent of enzymatic conversion of the substrate.

10. A method according to claim 9 wherein the carrier comprises human serum albumin.

11. A method according to claim 1 wherein the reagent comprises the structure



or



and contact in step (a) is at a temperature from about 0° C. to about 15° C.

12. A method according to claim 1 wherein the reagent comprises the structure