

**Walk Lab**  
**Montana State University**  
**Fluorescent PCR Ribotyping Pipeline**  
**April 23, 2019**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

Q1.) What are the numbers in the results file?

A1.) The numbers are the Bray-Curtis dissimilarity (BCD) values between your sample and a sample in our database. BCDs range between 0 and 1 and the lower the value, the better the match.

Q2.) What does "You may want to compare chromatograms." mean?

A2.) This comment means that the BCD is between 0.13 and 0.20. BCDs in this range represent chromatograms that sometimes differ by the presence/absence of a single peak. While this is a rare occurrence, you should probably compare your chromatogram to one from the database to be absolutely sure the match is exact. Feel free to download chromatograms using the link on [thewalklab.com/tools](http://thewalklab.com/tools).

Q3.) What does "This is likely NOT a match." mean?

A3.) This comment means that the BCD is greater than 0.20. Every sample will be matched to something in the database (i.e. BCDs represent the best match). Based on data from reference isolates, however, chromatogram comparisons that result in BCDs over 0.20 almost always differ by at least one peak. If you feel your data are good, please contact us as you may have discovered a new F-ribotype!

Q4.) I submitted "x" samples, but not all of them show up in the results. Why?

A4.) This is an indication that submitted chromatograms were filtered out. If this is the case, take a look at the chromatogram. There is likely either low signal (i.e. no peak over 1000 fluorescent units) or no signal at all. Caution should be used when interpreting chromatograms with low signals because small peaks may not be present.

Q5.) What is the difference between 'F' and 'FP' designations?

A5.) Ribotypes with an 'F' designation refer to those with congruent nomenclature to the *C. difficile* reference network in the UK ('F' is for fluorescent, as in fluorescent PCR ribotyping). These designations were established either by analyzing reference strains, through comparative genomics, or by inspection of our .fsa files by personnel at Leeds. Ribotypes with an 'FP' designation are fluorescent ribotypes with proposed nomenclature. It is possible that some or all of these are represented in the UK collection, but comparative analyses have not yet been undertaken to make designations congruent in both databases.