

Clostridioides Difficile Infection (CDI)

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RUNNYMEDE HEALTHCARE CENTRE

Clostridioides Difficile (*C. diff*)

WHAT IS CLOSTRIDIOIDES DIFFICILE?

Also known as *C. diff*, is a bacterium that causes infectious diarrhea and intestinal inflammation.

C. diff produces spores that can survive in a hospital environment and are killed only with certain disinfectants like bleach.

HOW IS *C. DIFF* SPREAD?

It can be spread through:

- Direct contact with a patient who has CDI, or contact with the patient's bodily fluids
- Touching surfaces contaminated with bacteria or spores and then eating or touching the mouth without first cleaning their hands

WHAT IS *C. DIFF* INFECTION?

In most cases, *C. diff* infections occur in hospitals with patients taking antibiotics. Antibiotics can kill the good bacteria in a person's bowels, causing *C. diff* to overgrow and produce toxins. These toxins can damage the bowel, leading to inflammation and diarrhea.

WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON SYMPTOMS?

- Watery diarrhea
- Abdominal pain
- Fever
- Nausea
- Loss of appetite

WHO IS AT RISK OF A *C. DIFF* INFECTION?

- Patients with multiple hospital stays
- Patients with recent antibiotic treatment
- Elderly individuals and those with weakened immune systems (e.g., patients undergoing chemotherapy)
- Patients who have had bowel surgery

WHAT TESTS ARE DONE TO DETERMINE A *C. DIFF* INFECTION?

If a patient has symptoms of a *C. diff* infection, a stool sample will be collected and tested for toxins.

CAN *C. DIFF* BE TREATED?

Yes, antibiotics can be used to treat a *C. diff* infection, but the infection may recur and require additional treatment.

HOW CAN THE SPREAD OF *C. DIFF* BE PREVENTED IN A HOSPITAL SETTING?

If a patient has a *C. diff* infection, its spread can be prevented by:

- Placing the patient in a private room with a private toilet facility
- Placing the patient on contact precautions and posting a precautionary sign outside the patient's door
- Wearing a protective gown and gloves inside the patient's room, as indicated on the precautionary sign



- Cleaning and disinfecting patient care equipment with bleach after each use
- Practicing proper hand hygiene:
  1. Use an alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) before entering the patient's room
  2. Use soap and water when leaving the patient's room
  3. Restrict all activities outside the patient's room while the patient has symptoms
  4. Clean and disinfect the patient's room and washroom twice per day

HOW CAN VISITORS BE PROTECTED?

People who are visiting a patient with a *C. diff* infection should:

- Follow the instructions from the precautionary sign posted on the door of the patient's room
- Clean their hands:
  - Use an alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) before entering the patient's room
  - Use soap and water when leaving the patient's room
- Use a gown and gloves:
  - Put on a gown and gloves before entering the patient's room
  - Remove the gown and gloves before leaving the patient's room
- Refrain from sitting on the patient's bed
- Do not use the patient's washroom; use the washroom designated for visitors
- Do not eat in the patient's room
- Refrain from visiting other patients