

How to stop spread of infection at home ?

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water and dry them after using the bathroom and before eating.
- Do not share personal items e.g. towels etc.
- Machine wash soiled laundry separately on the hottest wash cycle suitable for clothing.
- Tell family or carers to wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water and dry them after caring for you.
- Try to avoid using the same toilet that family members use. If this is not possible, clean And disinfect toilet after use.
Clean surfaces in bathrooms on a regular basis with household detergents. Disinfect with a mixture of bleach and water.

Effective Hand Washing



1. Palm to palm



2. Right palm over left dorsum and left palm over right dorsum



3. Palm to palm fingers interlaced



4. Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked



5. Rotational rubbing of right thumb clasped in left palm and vice versa



6. Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa

If you have any questions you want to ask, you can use the box provided below to remind you.

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Clostridium Difficile



Information Leaflet

For
**Patients,
Relatives
and Visitors**

What is *Clostridium difficile*?

Clostridium difficile, also known as 'C. difficile' and 'C. diff' is a bacteria (germ) that normally lives in your large intestine (gut/bowel). However, when you take an antibiotic, some of the 'good' bacteria dies causing the *Clostridium difficile* bacterium to multiply and you may get an infection in your large intestine.

Symptoms:-

- Diarrhoea, which has a very unpleasant smell
- Stomach cramps
- Fever
- Nausea
- Loss of appetite

Most people only get mildly ill and recover fully from it. However, in certain circumstances you may get seriously ill and develop colitis (inflammation of the bowel). If the colitis is severe it can be life threatening.

How is it diagnosed?

A sample of diarrhoea is sent to the laboratory for testing.

Is it contagious?

Yes, it can survive on your hands and surfaces for a long time unless they are washed. It can then pass from your hands and surfaces to others through unwashed hands and soiled surfaces and equipment. To prevent this you, your family members and hospital staff need to regularly wash hands and clean and disinfect surfaces and equipment.

Who is most likely to get diarrhoea?

You are most at risk if you:-

- Are taking or have recently finished taking antibiotics
- Have spent a long time in hospital or other healthcare setting (e.g. nursing home)
- Are older
- Have a serious illness
- Have a weakened immunity (e.g. receiving cancer treatment)
- Have had bowel surgery

Treatment for diarrhoea

- Certain antibiotics may have caused the diarrhoea so you may have to stop taking them.
- Other antibiotics which are effective against the *Clostridium difficile* bacteria may be given
- It is important to drink enough fluids so that you don't become dehydrated

What happens if I have diarrhoea while in hospital?

- You will be moved to a single room or special ward and given a toilet or commode for your own use.
- You must make sure to wash your hands with soap and water after using the toilet and before meals.
- Staff looking after you will wear aprons and gloves and wash their hands after caring for you.

Can I have visitors?

Yes, as healthy people are at very little risk of getting *Clostridium difficile* unless they are taking antibiotics. If you have any concerns about someone visiting, please seek advice from nursing staff first.

Your visitors will be asked to:

- Report to the nurse in charge before visiting you.
- Wash their hands with soap and water after visiting you.
- Wear gloves and aprons if they are helping with your personal care.
- Sit on the chairs provided, not on your bed
- Only use the public toilets

Will any of my treatment be delayed because of it?

- Your tests or treatment should continue as planned, with staff taking the correct precautions to prevent spreading.
- Some non-urgent tests may be delayed if you have severe diarrhoea

How will I know when it is no longer infectious?

Once the diarrhoea has stopped for at least 48 hours and your bowel motion is back to normal. However, it may remain in your bowel for sometime afterwards and the diarrhoea may return requiring further treatment.

Can I go home with it?

You should normally wait until the diarrhoea has settled and your doctor is satisfied that you are fit to go home. Your doctor will let you know if you need further treatment.

Can the diarrhoea come back?

Yes, some patients may suffer a relapse of diarrhoea after discharge. You should contact your G.P. and inform him/her that you had *Clostridium difficile* recently, in case you may need antibiotics in the future.