

Preventing the Spread of *Clostridioides Difficile* (*C. diff*)

What is *C. Diff*?

C. diff is a germ (bacteria) that can cause watery diarrhea, fever, upset stomach, belly pain and loss of appetite.

People most at risk are those who are taking or recently took antibiotics, the elderly and people with certain medical problems.

How Can You Prevent the Spread of *C. diff* in the Hospital?

- Washing your hands with soap and water is the best way to reduce the spread of *C. diff*.
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer alone does not kill *C. diff*.
- Check with your nurse before leaving the room.
- Put on a clean gown and robe before leaving the room.
- Wash your hands after using the bathroom, blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.
- Wash your hands before eating.
- Limit visitors.
- **Visitors:**
 - Check with a nurse before entering the room. Follow the “Enteric Precautions” sign as directed.
 - Cleanse your hands with hand sanitizer before entering the patient’s room. Wash your hands with soap and water right away after leaving the patient’s room.
 - Keep infants or young children from crawling on the floor.

- Do not sit on the patient’s bed or use the patient’s bathroom.
- Do not take the patient’s belongings, care items or food outside the room to other hospital areas.
- Do not go into other areas of the hospital until you have washed your hands with soap and water.

How Can You Prevent the Spread of *C. diff* at Home?

You can return to your normal routine. The diarrhea should be better or completely gone before you go home. This makes giving *C. diff* to other people much less likely.

To lower the chances of getting the *C. diff* infection again or of spreading it to others:

- If you have a prescription to treat *C. diff*, take the medicine exactly as prescribed by your doctor. Finish all of the medicine as directed.
- Wash your hands often. This is especially important after going to the bathroom, changing a diaper and before preparing food.
- People who live with you should wash their hands often.
- Clean surfaces in bathrooms, kitchens and other areas on a regular basis with disinfectants that contain bleach.

Tell your doctor right away if you develop more diarrhea after you get home.

Information adapted from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.