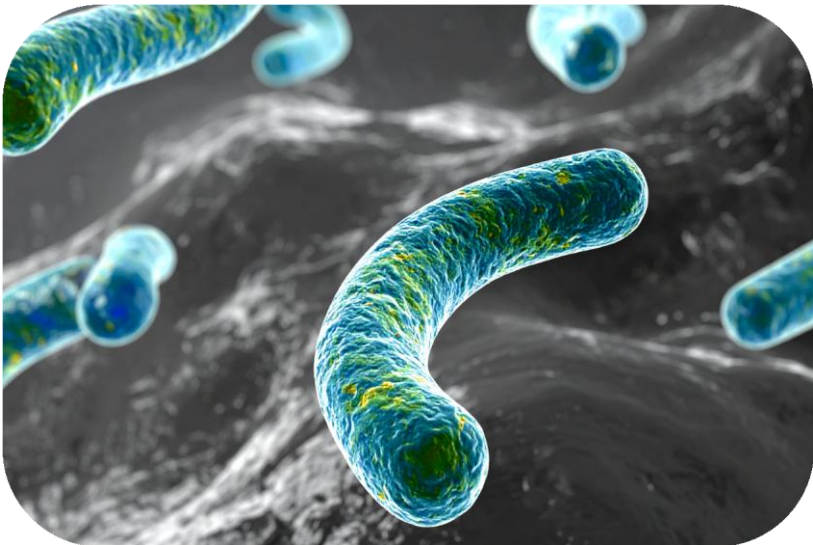


What is Clostridioides difficile?

Patient information leaflet



What is Clostridioides difficile?

Clostridioides difficile (commonly known as C.diff) is a bacteria found in the intestine along with other bacteria. Sometimes, as a result of taking antibiotics, some bacteria are destroyed but C.diff survives and multiplies to produce toxins which may cause diarrhoea.

How will I know if I have Clostridioides difficile?

The main symptom of C.diff is diarrhoea, which can range from mild to severe. Abdominal pain, fever, loss of appetite and sickness may also be present. Symptoms may last from a few days to a few weeks.

How is it diagnosed?

A faecal (poo) sample is sent to the laboratory to confirm whether or not you have C.diff infection.

Can it be treated?

Where possible, any antibiotics you are taking may be stopped. You may be given an alternative antibiotic to treat the C.diff infection.

It is very important that you do not become dehydrated, so remember to drink plenty of water and/or consider electrolyte replacement.

Your GP will review your medications, such as Omeprazole and may recommend a break. Do stop taking antidiarrheals such as Loperamide/Imodium.

How does C.diff spread?

The main risk is person to person contact, e.g. hand to hand contact and via hand to mouth contact, although the bacteria can survive in the environment for months.

How can the spread be prevented?

Good hand washing is the single most important infection prevention and control measure.

Remember to wash your hands with soap and water and dry them thoroughly on a clean towel * Before and after using the toilet. * Before handling food, * After handling soiled bedding or clothing.



Do NOT share towels, facecloths etc. with anyone else.

Clothing, bed linen, towels etc. should be washed at 60°C or above if possible or at 40°C using washing powder that contains bleach in order to destroy the C.diff bacteria.

Cleaning around the home should be carried out with detergent and bleach based product.

Particular attention should be given to:

- Washbasins
- Baths
- Toilet seat and handles
- Showers
- Any surface which comes into contact with the hands e.g. door handles, telephones and keyboards.

It is important to use a clean cloth each time to prevent surfaces being re-infected.

Use disposable cleaning cloths or wash the cloth at 60°C or above.

What should I do if my diarrhoea starts again?

If your diarrhoea starts again once you have completed any course of antibiotics, you should contact your GP or the Infection Control Team 01502 445361

For further advice either speak to the nurse looking after you, GP or Contact the Infection Prevention and Control Team on 01502 445361

More Information:

NHS Website: www.nhs.uk/conditions/c-difficile/

Health Security Agency (UKHSA):

www.gov.uk/government/publications/clostridioides-difficile-infection-how-to-deal-with-the-problem

Compliments, concerns or complaints

Tel: 01502 445447

Email: patientliaison@ecchcic.nhs.uk Or

write to:

PALS, East Coast Community Healthcare,

Hamilton House, Battery Green Road,
Lowestoft, NR32 1DE

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