CLOSTRIDIOIDES DIFFICILE *(formerly known as Clostridium difficile)*

Clostridioides difficile (also known as *C. diff*) is a bacterium that causes diarrhea and colitis (an inflammation of the colon). *C. diff* infection can be life-threatening.

IMPACT

C. diff infection is estimated to cause almost half a million illnesses in the United States each year, and an estimated 29,300 deaths.[1]

About **1 in 6 patients** who get *C. diff* infection will get it again in the subsequent 2–8 weeks.[1]

One in 11 people over 65 diagnosed with a healthcare-associated *C. diff* infection die within a month.[2]

RISK

People are 7 to 10 times more likely to get *C. diff* infection while taking an antibiotic and during the month after.[3]

Extended stays in healthcare settings, such as hospitals and nursing homes, also increase their risk.

More than 80% of *C. diff* deaths occur. in people 65 and older.

SPREAD

C. diff spreads when people touch surfaces that are contaminated with poop from an infected person.

Or when people don't wash their hands with soap and water.

It can also happen when one healthcare facility fails to notify another when it transfers a patient with *C. diff.*

Healthcare professionals can help PREVENT *C. diff by:*

BE ANTIBIOTICS AWARE
SMART USE, BEST CARE

Optimizing the way they prescribe antibiotics.

Using the tests that give the most accurate results.

Rapidly identifing and isolating patients with *C. diff.*

Wearing gloves and gowns when treating patients with *C. diff*—and remembering that hand sanitizer doesn't kill *C. diff.*

Cleaning surfaces in rooms where *C. diff* patients are treated with EPA-approved, spore-killing disinfectant (see list K).

cdc.gov/cdiff

[1] Guh AY, Mu Y, Winston LG et al. N Engl J Med 2020;382:1320–30. DOI: 10.1056/NEJMoa1910215
[2] Lessa FC, Mu Yi, Bamberg WM et al. N Engl J Med 2015;372:825–34. DOI: 10.1056/NEJMoa1408913
[3] Hensgens MPM, Goorhuis A, Dekkers OM, Kuijper EJ. J Antimicrob Chemother 2011. DOI: 10.1093/jac/dkr508

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