

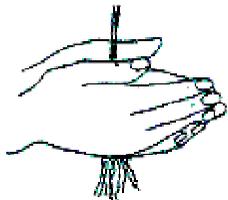
## How can you stop it spreading?

- All patients with symptoms will need a single room to prevent the spread to vulnerable patients.
- Healthcare workers will wear gloves and aprons when caring for you.
- Good hand washing with soap and water by both patients, visitors and staff is essential. Follow instructions given previously. Alcohol gel is not effective against this bacteria.
- Thorough cleaning of the environment will be maintained.

## Can I have visitors?

Yes. Family and friends should not be at risk. Ask your visitors to wash their hands when they arrive and leave.

For further information contact  
the Infection Control Department  
Tel 01536 492482



## References

Brazir J. Duerden B. (1998) *Guidelines for optimal surveillance of Clostridium difficile infection in hospitals*  
Communicable Disease and Public Health

*National Clostridium difficile Standards Group Report to the Department of Health* (2004)

Journal of Hospital Infection

Wilson J. (2001) *Infection Control in Clinical Practice*; Bailliere Tindall Edinburgh

# Clostridium Difficile (C-Diff)

Antibiotic associated diarrhoea

If you wish to make any comments or require this information in another format or language, please contact the PALS Office:  
Telephone 01536 493305 or email [PALS@KGH.nhs.uk](mailto:PALS@KGH.nhs.uk)



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Information for patients

## What is *Clostridium difficile*?

*Clostridium difficile* (C-diff) is a spore forming bacterium and it is part of the normal bacteria found in the gut.

Some antibiotics used to treat other health conditions can reduce the normal bowel bacteria, allowing *Clostridium difficile* to multiply causing diarrhoea.

## How do you get it?

Symptoms, after antibiotic treatment, can vary in severity. They include diarrhoea, abdominal pain and feeling unwell.

The diarrhoea may stop when the antibiotic course is completed.

However, in some cases there is severe inflammation of the bowel that can be life threatening.

It is essential to carry out careful hand washing with soap and water to prevent the bacteria spreading.

## What is the best way to wash your hands?

- Follow the 6-step technique to ensure your hands are washed thoroughly.
- It only takes 20 - 30 seconds



1. After wetting hands and applying soap, rub hands palm to palm



2. Rub right palm over the back of the left hand then, swap hands



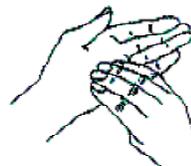
3. Rub hands together, palm to palm with the fingers interlaced



4. With clenched fists rub into the palm of the other hand.



5. Using the right hand, rub around the thumb, then, swap hands



6. Rub the tips of the fingers in the opposite palm, then, swap hands

- Always rinse your hands thoroughly to prevent soreness.
- Dry your hands using the paper towels provided and dispose of them in a pedal bin.
- Wash your hands after using the toilet or commode, before meals and before and after touching wounds or catheters.

## Can C-diff be treated?

Yes – certain antibiotics taken orally will help stop the diarrhoea. In mild cases it may clear up on its own.

## How do you know that I have C-diff?

A stool specimen will be taken and tested for the toxin that the bacteria produces.

## How will I know when I am better?

When your diarrhoea has stopped and you return to your regular bowel pattern.