

Clostridium Difficile Infection (CDI) Partnering With You in Infection Prevention

Clostridium difficile infections

People who have other illnesses or conditions that require antibiotic use are at risk for developing a Clostridium difficile infection (CDI or C. diff). Clostridium difficile is a bacterium that causes diarrhea as well as more serious intestinal conditions such as colitis, an inflammation of the bowel. People in good health usually don't get the infection.

How is CDI diagnosed?

If you are on antibiotics, or have recently taken antibiotics, and develop watery diarrhea, and possibly a fever, your health care provider might order testing and diagnose you with CDI.

A sample of your stool (feces) will be collected and sent to the laboratory for analysis. The laboratory will test the sample to see if Clostridium difficile is present. Results are available within four hours.

How is CDI treated?

Your health care provider might prescribe a specific type of antibiotic that kills the Clostridium difficile. You usually will need to take the antibiotic for 10 days.

What type of isolation or precautions are used?

If we suspect you have CDI while you are at Gillette, you will be placed in a private room until you no longer have diarrhea. An "Enteric Precautions" sign will be placed on your room door. We will limit your activities outside your room.

Health care workers who come into your room must wear a gown and gloves. Everyone (family and visitors as well) must wash their hands with soap and water when they leave your room.

It is important that you wash your hands after going to the bathroom and before eating. Your room will be cleaned regularly and any equipment removed from your room will be cleaned as well.

What do I need to know about going home if I still have CDI?

Healthy family and friends who are not taking antibiotics are at very low risk of developing CDI. However, hand hygiene (washing hands) is always important and should be done after using the bathroom and before eating.

Use a solution of chlorine bleach and water to clean surfaces around you at home. If you use this solution, mix 1 part bleach (unscented) with 9 parts tap water. (Change this solution each day and protect your face from splashes or sprays. Use protective dishwashing gloves.)

Pay special attention to areas in the house that might have had contact with stool. Use the bleach/water solution described above to clean surfaces.

To clean clothing, sheets and other fabric items (such as pillows and stuffed animals) that are soiled with stool, first rinse them. Then launder them in a washing machine using detergent and a hot water cycle. To help kill the *Clostridium difficile*, add bleach during the rinse cycle. (Refer to your washing machine instructions, if needed.) Dry the items in a clothes dryer using whatever cycle is typical for them.

Wash dishes and utensils as you usually do.

[Appointment: 651-290-8707](#) [Refer a Patient: 651-325-2200](#) [Pediatric Expert Consult](#) [More Ways to Contact Us](#)

This information is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice of your health care providers. If you have any questions, talk with your doctor or others on your health care team.

If you are a Gillette patient with urgent questions or concerns, please contact Telehealth Nursing at [651-229-3890](#).