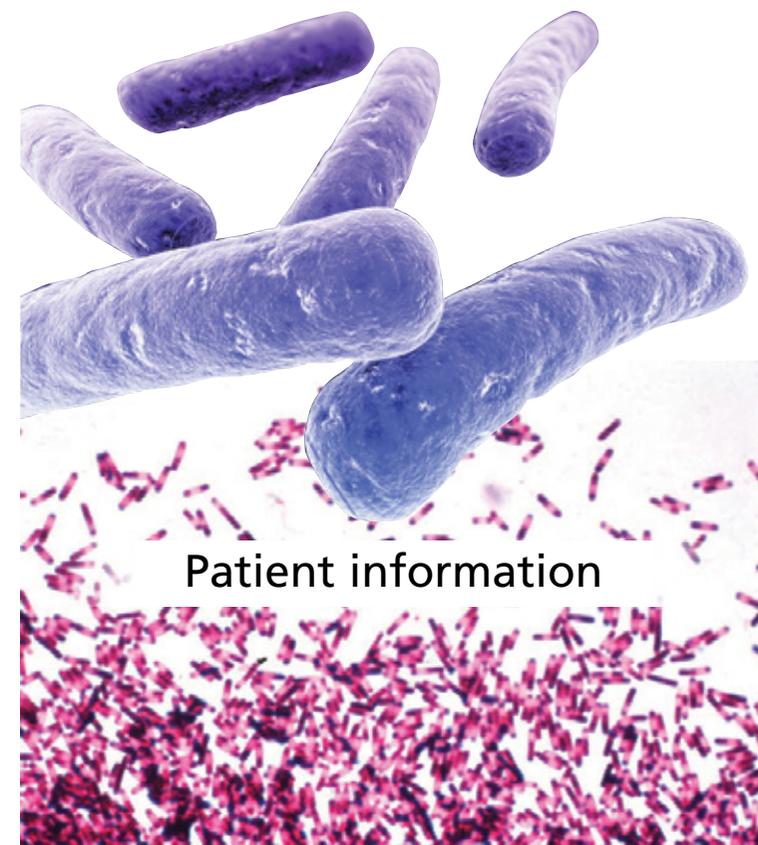


Clostridium Difficile

(*C.diff*)



Patient information

How is a C.diff infection treated?

You may be given an antibiotic that treats the C.diff infection. Any other antibiotics that you are on may be stopped.

If you are a community in-patient and have a C.diff infection you may be moved into a single room to reduce the risk of spreading it to other people. It is very important to avoid becoming dehydrated, so drink plenty of fluids.

Will it affect my family and friends?

C.diff is infectious and can be harmful to some people such as those with serious health problems. C.diff should not harm healthy people, including pregnant women, children, or babies.

Can I go home from a community in-patient area if I have C.diff?

As soon as you are well enough you will be able to go home. Having C.diff should not stop this. Your healthcare professional will give you any information or advice you need.



Contact us

If you need more information speak to your healthcare professional or contact:

Infection Prevention and Control Team
on **0113 843 4511**
Monday to Friday 8:30am to 5:00pm

Help us get it right

If you have a complaint, concern, comment or compliment please let us know by speaking to a member of our staff. We learn from your feedback and use the information to improve and develop our services.

If you would like to talk to someone outside the service contact the **Patient Experience Team** on **0113 220 8585**, Monday to Friday 9.30am to 4.30pm or email lch.pet@nhs.net

We can make this information available in Braille, large print, audio or other languages on request.

Working together for a safer healthcare environment

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www.leedscommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk



What you need to know about C.diff

All health care providers in Leeds are committed to reducing C.diff infection.

This leaflet contains information about C.diff and the steps you can take to protect yourself.

What is C.diff?

Lots of different bacteria live naturally in the gut. In about 3% of healthy adults this includes C.diff. It rarely causes any problems in healthy people.

When does C.diff cause a problem?

C.diff only causes a problem when something alters the natural balance of germs in the gut causing the body's defences to become weakened. Antibiotics used to treat other illnesses can sometimes cause this which then allows C.diff germs to increase causing irritation of the bowel.

If you are prescribed antibiotics always follow instructions from your doctor.



How is C.diff spread?

C.diff can be spread by direct contact with an infected person, or by touching a surface that has C.diff germs (spores) on it.

A person with C.diff infection releases germs (spores) into the environment when they go to the toilet. These germs can live for months and can be picked up on hands and surfaces causing spread of the infection.

This is why it is so important to thoroughly wash your hands with soap and water, particularly before you eat. Do not use alcohol hand-rub if you have C.diff or live with or care for someone with C.diff, as it is not effective against C.diff germs. **To remove them you must wash your hands.**

How can I help stop the spread of C.diff?

- Keep your hands clean.
- Always wash your hands with soap and water after using the toilet.
- Always wash your hands, or clean them with a wipe, before and after a meal.
- Clean and dry surfaces thoroughly, especially those frequently touched (e.g. toilet flush handle, taps, door handles).
- Wash soiled clothing separately as soon as you can in a high temperature.

What can I do about C.diff if I am a community in-patient?

- Let staff know if you have diarrhoea so they can identify a toilet for you to use.
- Always wash your hands after using the toilet.
- Keep your hands and body clean.
- Always ask staff to wash their hands before they touch you.
- Always wash your hands, or clean them with a wipe, before and after eating.
- It is important that all visitors clean their hands using soap and water before and after visiting.
- Let staff know if the toilet area is dirty.
- Keep the bed area and locker clear of clutter so it can be cleaned easily.
- Cover any food, fruit or sweets you may have at your bedside and do not share them.

It is everybody's responsibility to take these simple steps.

How will I know if I have C.diff?

Symptoms of C.diff infection include diarrhoea, blood in your poo, stomach pains, loss of appetite, fever and sometimes feeling sick. You will know you have C.diff if a sample of your poo tests positive. You will be given a C.diff card if you have the infection.