

Clostridioides Difficile (C. diff) Infection in Children

Clostridioides difficile (C. diff) is a germ that lives in the digestive tract. The germ spreads through the stomach and intestines or bowel area. C. diff can make toxins that cause diarrhea.

Symptoms

- Watery diarrhea
- Belly pain/tenderness/cramping
- Fever
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea

Kids at Risk for C. Diff

Healthy people don't often get C. diff. Your child is most likely to get it if:

- They have been taking antibiotics for other illnesses or conditions.
- They are a patient in the hospital.

How C. Diff Spreads

Germs in the stool can spread to surfaces, such as:

- Toilets
- Handles
- Bedpan
- Commode chairs
- Bedding
- Medical equipment
- Toys

Your child can become infected if they touch objects or surfaces that are contaminated and touch their mouth, nose, or urinary tract.

Preventing C. Diff Infection

Hand hygiene: Anyone can spread the germ to other people and surfaces. It's important to wash hands with soap and water after using the bathroom. Everyone must wash their hands after being in contact with someone who has C. diff.

Surface cleaning: It is important to clean items the patient uses with bleach to kill the germs.

Testing

Your child will submit a stool sample to the lab to test for C. diff.

Hospital Stay with C. Diff Infection

If your child is suspected to have C. Diff, they will be put into isolation. Once the lab confirms a positive C. diff test, your child will stay in isolation at the hospital. Your child will require Enhanced Contact Isolation for 30 days or the entirety of their stay, whichever is longer. Your child will continue to stay in isolation if they remain in the hospital or are readmitted to the hospital during this 30 day time period. Your child's doctor or nurse will review your child's C. diff isolation plan.

Your child is placed in a hospital room that follows **Enhanced Contact Precautions**. You and your child are asked to always stay in the room except to leave for a procedure/test.

Your child will not be able to use the common areas, shared fridges, or playrooms. Please ask staff if you need water or anything from the common areas.

Visitors

Your child's care team and visitors will have to wash their hands with soap and water before and after visiting your child.

Everyone will wear gowns and gloves while in the room.

Therapy

Working with therapy while in the hospital is important. Discuss with your nurse if your child can go on walks in the hallway or work with a therapist outside of the room.

At Home with C. diff

When you are at home, you can follow your normal routine. There are a few things you should do to decrease the chance of your child having C. diff infection again and spreading it to others.

- Have your child take any medicine as prescribed.
- Have your child wash their hands with soap and water often. They should wash after they go to the bathroom and before they touch food.
- People who live with your child should also wash their hands with soap and water often.
- Remind visitors to wash their hands with soap and water as they come and go.
- If you can, make one bathroom in your house for your child's use only. Clean the bathroom (including light switches, doorknobs, and faucet handles) with a 1:10 bleach solution (1 cup bleach, 9 cups water).

Washing Objects

We suggest you properly clean any items that contain stool. Here are the steps you need to follow.

1. Rinse the object in water.
2. Wash the item in hot water with soap.
3. If you are able, add some bleach to the water to help kill the germs.
4. Dry objects on the hottest setting that will not damage them.

When to Call

Call your doctor right away if your child's diarrhea gets worse.