

Can I go home if I have Clostridium difficile?

As soon as your general condition allows, you can go home. Your doctor will contact your GP so that they are aware that you have had **Clostridium difficile**, should you have diarrhoea again.

Two days after your diarrhoea stops and your bowels have returned to normal, you may return to your residential or nursing home.

If I need some more information, who can I speak to?

If nurses looking after you are not able to answer all your questions, you can ask them to contact the infection control nurses who will be able to give you more information about **Clostridium difficile**.

Where can I get more information about Clostridium difficile?

 **Health Protection Scotland**
www.hps.scot.nhs.uk

 **The Health Protection Agency**
www.hpa.org.uk

 **NHS Inform**
www.nhsinform.co.uk

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde



www.nhsggc.org.uk/your-health/public-health/infection-prevention-and-control/nfectioncontrol

Further advice can be obtained by contacting the local infection control team. Leaflets are available in other languages and in large print version from the following website:



www.nhsggc.org.uk/your-health/public-health/infection-prevention-and-control/nfectioncontrol

Information for Patients and Carers about
Clostridium difficile

Version 4

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What is Clostridium difficile?

Clostridium difficile are bacteria (germs) that can cause an infection in the bowel which may result in diarrhoea. **Clostridium difficile** can cause infection in hospital patients, especially the elderly. Infection usually occurs in patients who have received recent antibiotic therapy.

How do I know that I have Clostridium difficile?

We will send a sample of diarrhoea to the laboratory and test it for **Clostridium difficile**. You may experience watery diarrhoea and abdominal cramps, which are common symptoms.

How did I get Clostridium difficile?

Bacteria (germs) are found on everyone, both inside and outside the body.

Clostridium difficile may have been in your bowel before you came into hospital where it lived without doing you any harm (colonisation), or you may have acquired it since you came into hospital.

If you have been given antibiotics or other medication, the normal bacteria in your bowel may change, allowing **Clostridium difficile** to multiply and cause diarrhoea. **Clostridium difficile** can also spread on people's hands and from contaminated equipment and environment.

How do we treat Clostridium difficile?

If possible, we will give you a course of antibiotics to treat the infection. Occasionally symptoms can return and we may give you alternative treatment.

What will happen to me?

If you have diarrhoea we may move you to a single room, with your own toilet, to prevent it spreading to other patients. Staff will be wearing gloves and aprons when caring for you.

If there are several patients with the same illness, you may be nursed together in one part of the ward. We will clean your room or bed space twice a day, every day, with disinfectant while you are ill. Two days after your diarrhoea stops and your bowels have returned to normal, your room or bed space will be thoroughly cleaned and precautions may be stopped.

Remember to drink plenty of fluids whilst you are having diarrhoea.

Will Clostridium difficile affect my family and friends?

Clostridium difficile is not usually a risk to healthy people including children. Visitors should wash their hands carefully with soap and water before leaving your room or bed bay. Visitors should also use

the hand gel before entering and leaving the area. Gloves and aprons are not necessary for visitors. Only two visitors should visit at a time.

We would advise that visitors:

- Do not bring in babies or infants when visiting.
- Do not move around the ward from patient to patient
- Do not eat food or drink at the bedside

If they are visiting someone else apart from you, it is better if they see you last.

Please feel free to discuss any questions with the ward staff or the infection control nurse.

How can I stop the spread of Clostridium difficile?

It is very important that you wash your hands carefully with soap and water, particularly after using the toilet and before eating.

If you are having difficulty getting to a sink to wash your hands, please ask the staff to bring you a bowl of soap and water, or alternatively you can use hand wipes.