






# Healthcare Associated Infections (HAI) Clostridium Difficile (C. Diff) Self-Management Plan

<b>General Health Guidelines:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take medications only as prescribed by your healthcare provider.</li> <li>Use soap and water when washing your hands.</li> <li>Wear gloves when providing care to someone who has C. diff.</li> </ul>
<b>Green Flags – All Clear</b> 	<b>What this means...</b>
<p><b>If you:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do not take antibiotics regularly</li> <li>Do not have diarrhea</li> <li>Regularly wash your hands often with soap and water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good work!</li> </ul>
<p>Keep up the great work!</p>	
<b>Yellow Flags – Caution</b> 	<b>What this means...</b>
<p><b>If you have <u>any</u> of the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Three or more watery stools a day and symptoms lasting more than two days</li> <li>A new fever, greater than 102° F</li> <li>Mild to moderate abdominal pain or cramping and abdominal tenderness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You could have HAI or C. diff or some other type of infection.</li> </ul> <div> <p>Call your doctor, consulting nurse, or healthcare provider if symptoms do not improve.</p> <p>Name:</p> <p>Number:</p> <p>Instructions:</p> </div>
<p>If you notice a Yellow Flag, work closely with your health care team.</p>	
<b>Red Flags-Stop and Think</b> 	<b>What this means...</b>
<p><b>If you have:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Watery diarrhea 10–15 times a day</li> <li>Severe abdominal cramping, pain, or a swollen abdomen</li> <li>Fever over 102° F and experience chills, light-headedness and have a fast heart rate</li> <li>Bright red blood, dark, tarry colored stools, or pus in your stool</li> <li>Nausea or loss of appetite</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This indicates you need to be seen by a healthcare provider immediately.</li> </ul> <div> <p>Name:</p> <p>Number:</p> <p>Follow these instructions: <b>CALL 9-1-1</b></p> </div>

**If you notice a Red Flag, CALL 9-1-1. Emergency!**



# Healthcare Associated Infections (HAI) Clostridium Difficile (C. Diff)

## C. diff Fast Facts

People getting medical care can get serious healthcare-associated infections (HAIs). HAIs are included in central line-associated bloodstream infections, catheter-associated urinary tract infections, and ventilator-associated pneumonia. Infections may also occur at surgery sites, known as surgical site infections. CDC works to monitor and prevent these infections because they affect a patient's health and safety. One type of HAI is caused by the bacterium *Clostridium difficile* (abbreviated C. diff). C. diff bacteria are found in the environment—in soil, air, water, human and animal feces, and in food products, such as processed meats. People who are healthy may naturally carry the bacteria in their large intestine and not have ill effects from the bacteria. People with certain illnesses or conditions requiring antibiotics and the elderly are at greater risk of getting this germ.

C. diff is an important cause of infectious disease death in the U.S. According to a 2015 study released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly half a million U.S. residents suffered from C. diff infection in a single year. And approximately 29,000 patients died within 30 days of initial C. diff diagnosis.

In severe cases of C. diff infection, signs and symptoms can include:

- Watery diarrhea 10–15 times a day
- Abdominal cramping and pain, which may be severe
- Fever greater than 102 degrees F.
- Blood or pus in the stool
- Nausea
- Dehydration
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss
- Swollen abdomen
- Kidney failure
- Increased white blood cell count

*Clostridium difficile* is pronounced:

**Klo-STRID-ee-um**

**dif-uh-SEEL**

It is also known as C. diff, pronounced:

**See-diff**

**C. diff is passed when any surface or material (such as a toilet, bathing tub, or tubing) becomes contaminated with bacteria that is found in feces. C. diff is infectious! It is very important to wash your hands with soap and**

## So, what can you do?

- Take antibiotics only as prescribed by your doctor and take all the medication, even if you start feeling better. Only stop taking a medication, including antibiotics, if your doctor tells you to do so.
- Avoid unnecessary use of antibiotics.
- Tell your doctor if you have been on antibiotics and/or start to have diarrhea within a few months after taking the antibiotic.
- Wash your hands often, especially after using the bathroom and before eating. Do not rely on alcohol-based hand rubs as these have not been proven to prevent the spread of C-difficile.
- Try to use a separate bathroom if you have diarrhea.
- Keep the bathroom clean if you share the bathroom with someone who has diarrhea.
- Take extra care while cleaning: You can use a bleach-based cleaner or make your own by mixing 1 cup (240mL) bleach with 10 cups (2365 mL) of water to clean any hard surfaces in your home.
- Clean the bathroom last, after you clean the other spaces in your home.
- Be sure to clean doorknobs and the flushing handle on your toilet.
- Use paper towels when cleaning.
- Wash towels, bathmats, rugs, and shower curtains often. Add bleach if possible.
- Wash and dry clothes on hottest setting possible.
- Stay informed-latest Center for Disease Control-<https://www.cdc.gov/cdiff/index.html>



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