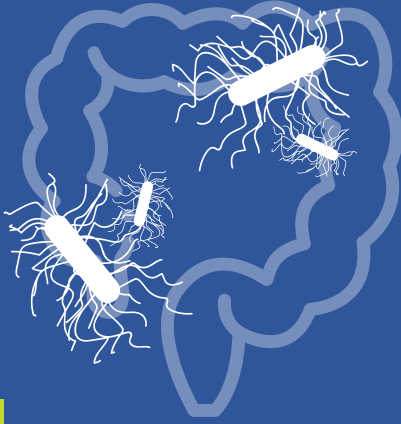


Clostridioides difficile:

A Closer Look at this Public Health Threat

Clostridioides difficile—
or C. difficile—
is a type of bacterium that
can live in human intestines.¹

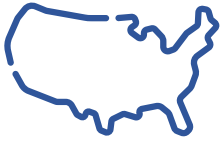
C. difficile can cause an
intestinal infection that can
be serious, and in some
cases, fatal, known as
C. difficile infection (CDI).^{1,2,3,4}



C. difficile has been
recognized by the
**World Health Organization
(WHO)** as a priority
pathogen and, by the
**US Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention
(CDC)** as a public health
threat that requires
urgent and aggressive
action.^{5,6}

– BY THE NUMBERS –

An estimated
462,000
CDIs occur yearly
in the US alone.⁷



Every year in the
US, there are
approximately
20,500
in-hospital deaths
associated with
CDI.⁷



1 out of 11
adults over the
age of 65 with
healthcare-
associated CDI will
die within
1 month
of diagnosis.⁸



Each year,
the US spends
around
\$4.8 billion,
and Europe
spends around
\$3 billion,
in healthcare-
related CDI costs.^{9,10}



An increasing
number of cases
are being reported
outside of hospitals
and nursing homes.

According to the CDC's
2017 Emerging
Infections Program
(EIP) report, nearly
50% of CDIs
are community-
associated.¹¹



C. difficile bacteria can be anywhere and persistent



C. difficile spores can be
found in soil, air, water,
and food products and can
persist on surfaces for up
to **five months.**



If, for example, someone
touches a surface contaminated
with *C. difficile* spores and then
puts their hand to their mouth,
they may unknowingly ingest
them and become infected.^{12,13}



C. difficile spores
are resistant to heat and
other common cleaning
agents like detergents
and alcohol-based hand
sanitizers.^{14,15}

C. difficile can be a debilitating disease



Despite apparent
recovery from an
initial episode, as
many as one in five
people treated for
CDI will experience at
least one recurrence
of the infection.¹⁶



CDI can have
effects on a
patient's mental
and emotional
health, with many
experiencing anxiety and
fear about recurrence.¹⁷



C. difficile
infection can
cause symptoms
ranging from
diarrhea to life-
threatening inflammation
of the colon.¹

CDI symptoms can be debilitating



Common symptoms of CDI
include watery diarrhea,^{1,4}
abdominal tenderness or
pain, fever, nausea, and
loss of appetite.^{1,18}

Severe symptoms may include swelling
or inflammation of the large intestine,
toxic megacolon (a rare yet
life-threatening complication of severe
colon disease or infection), and in some
cases may even result in death.¹

Certain factors can put you at risk for CDI



**Antibiotic use is the primary
risk-factor for developing CDI.**⁴

**Other risk
factors
include:**¹⁴



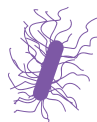
Advanced age



A weakened
immune system



Hospitalization



Previous infection with *C. difficile*
or known exposure to the bacteria

Certain measures can help limit the spread of C. difficile¹



**Thorough
hand washing**



**The use of
spore-killing
disinfectants***

*Such as hypochlorite solutions



**Judicious
use of
antibiotics**



**Isolation of
those who
are infected**

Learn more about *C. difficile* and CDI by visiting: <https://www.cdc.gov/cdiff/>

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