

What are the symptoms of *C. diff*?

- Watery diarrhea 3 or more times a day for 2 or more days.
- Fever.
- Nausea.
- Abdominal pain.
- Loss of appetite.

C. diff can cause mild or very serious diarrhea. It can even cause death.

How is *C. diff* diagnosed?

Your healthcare provider will send a stool sample to a laboratory to be tested for *C. diff* bacteria.

How is *C. diff* treated?

C. diff sometimes gets better on its own a few days after you've finished taking antibiotics. If it doesn't get better on its own, it can be treated with other antibiotics.

Always wash your hands with soap and water. Hand sanitizer doesn't kill *C. diff* spores.

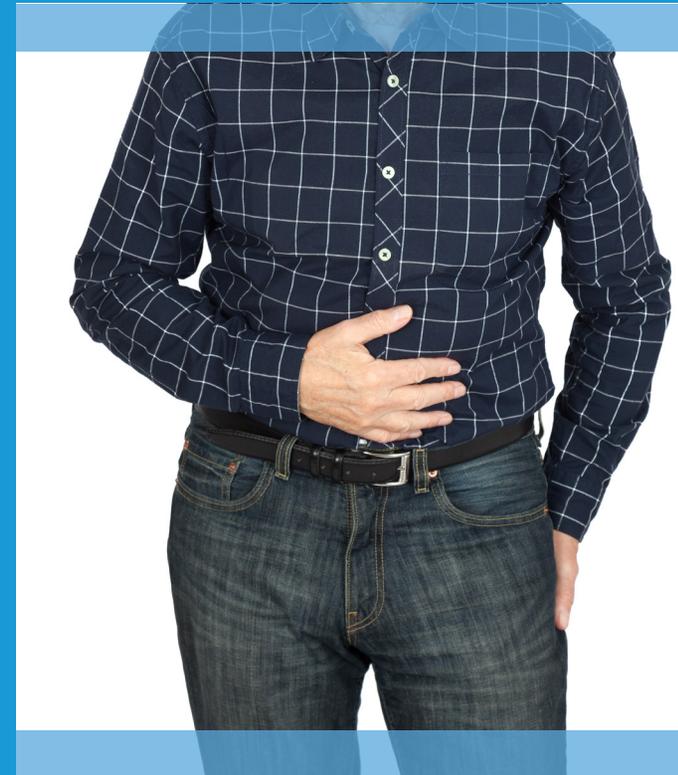
How to wash your hands

1. Wet your hands with water.
2. Put soap on your hands.
3. Rub your hands together. Rub all surfaces of your hands, fingers and thumbs (including under and around jewelry) for at least 15 seconds.
4. Rinse all the soap from your hands.
5. Dry your hands with a paper towel.
6. Use a paper towel to turn off the faucet and open the door.

Wash your hands to protect yourself against *C. diff*.

- ☑ When your hands are dirty.
- ☑ Before and after using the bathroom.
- ☑ After sneezing, coughing or using a tissue.
- ☑ Before making or serving food.
- ☑ Before eating.
- ☑ Before feeding a baby.
- ☑ Before and after changing a diaper.
- ☑ Before touching newly clean laundry.
- ☑ After touching dirty laundry.
- ☑ After touching trash.
- ☑ After taking off gloves.
- ☑ After touching or cleaning up after animals.

What to do about *C. diff* (*Clostridioides difficile*)



In partnership with
Pierce County Antibiotic Resistance Task Force

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What is *Clostridioides difficile*?

Clostridioides difficile (also called *C. diff*) is a bacterium that can cause diarrhea. Some people have *C. diff* in their body but are not sick from it.

Who gets *C. diff*?

Most *C. diff* infections happen after taking antibiotics. It most commonly happens to older adults who are hospitalized or live in a long-term care facility.

How is *C. diff* spread?

C. diff spores can live outside the body for a long time. They can be found in poop or on unclean surfaces.

If you touch an unclean surface, you can transfer *C. diff* spores from your hand to your mouth. The spores are not killed by stomach acid, so they pass into the intestines where they multiply and can cause diarrhea.

How can you avoid spreading *C. diff*?

Wash your hands often.

- ☑ Use soap and water and rub all surfaces of your hands, fingers and thumbs.
- ☑ Remind everyone who lives with you to wash their hands often.
- ☑ Everyone should always wash their hands after using the bathroom and before preparing or serving food.

Be careful when doing laundry.

- ☑ When picking up dirty clothes, towels or bedding, hold them away from your body.
- ☑ Use hot water, bleach and detergent to wash laundry.
- ☑ Use a hot clothes dryer to dry laundry.
- ☑ Wash bedding once or twice a week.
- ☑ Don't overload the washing machine.
- ☑ Clean and disinfect the laundry basket between dirty and clean laundry.
- ☑ Wash your hands before touching clean laundry.

Clean and disinfect.

- ☑ Frequently clean, then disinfect commonly touched surfaces, like light switches, doorknobs, faucet handles and phones.
- ☑ You can buy disinfectant at most stores. Read the label and follow the instructions. Bleach solution is an easy-to-make, inexpensive disinfectant. Never mix bleach with any cleaner containing ammonia. Wear gloves when using disinfectant.
- ☑ Put used gloves and other trash in a plastic bag tied at the top before putting it in the trash can.

Be careful when preparing or serving food.

- ☑ Don't prepare or serve food for others until 48 hours after your diarrhea has stopped.
- ☑ If you must prepare or serve food for others, be sure to thoroughly wash your hands with soap and water before preparing food and after using the bathroom.

Use a separate bathroom.

- ☑ When possible, use a separate bathroom than everyone else who lives with you.
- ☑ If you can't use a separate bathroom, clean the visible soil from the toilet seat and handle, sink and faucets after each use. Then disinfect the surfaces.

Use antibiotics as prescribed.

- ☑ If you're prescribed antibiotics, use them exactly as instructed. Don't skip doses or stop before they're all gone. The last few doses kill the toughest germs.

Monitor your diarrhea.

- ☑ If your diarrhea stops but then comes back, immediately call your healthcare provider.

Make new
bleach solution
each day.
The chemicals
become inactive
over time.

How to make bleach solution

1. Add 1 of tablespoon bleach to a container.
2. Add 1 quart of water to the container.
3. Mix well.