

Clostridium difficile is one of the many bacteria (germs) that are found in the bowel and can live there harmlessly.

About three per cent of healthy adults in the community carries *C. difficile* in their bowel.

Sometimes having antibiotics can affect the normal balance of bacteria in the bowel. If this happens, *C. difficile* may have a chance to multiply and cause symptoms (infection).

The information in this leaflet will help patients who have had a *C. difficile* infection, and their carers too.

How will I know if the *C. difficile* has gone?

When your normal bowel habit returns, it is considered the infection has gone.

There is no need for a follow-up test.

Should I tell my GP that I had a *C. difficile* infection in hospital?

Your GP should have been informed about your *C. difficile* infection in your discharge letter.

However, if you visit your GP after discharge from hospital, you should tell him/her that you had a *C. difficile* infection.

What if the diarrhoea returns?

Symptoms of *C. difficile* diarrhoea should have improved significantly, if not completely resolved, before your discharge.

If you are still on antibiotic treatment for *C. difficile*, it is very important that you complete the course.

Please contact your GP if you start to experience diarrhoea, abdominal (tummy) cramps or tenderness, or fever.

What should I do when I am discharged home from hospital?

Normal procedures of routine hand washing and cleaning of the home environment are all that are needed.

Wash hands with soap and water, especially after using the toilet and before handling food.

Clean surfaces in bathrooms, kitchens and other areas on a regular basis with household detergent.

Will other family members/guests in my home be affected?

People in good health do not usually get a *C. difficile* infection so friends and relatives can visit. *C. difficile* does not present a risk to your pets.

Should laundry be treated any differently?

If you still have *C. difficile* diarrhoea, any soiled clothes, bedding, towels etc. should be washed separately in a washing machine at the highest temperature possible for that fabric.

Once your diarrhoea has resolved, there is no need to separate items. ►

Do I need to stay off work?

If you have symptoms of *C. difficile*, you should remain off work until you have been free of diarrhoea for 48 hours.

If you work within a hospital or healthcare facility, or within catering or in the food industry, you should inform your manager and/or Occupational Health department that you have had a *C. difficile* infection. •

For more information:

- ask your hospital doctor or nurse
- ask your GP or Practice Nurse
- look on NHS Choices www.nhs.uk
- or Health Protection Agency www.hpa.org.uk or Public Health England www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england

Surrey & Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust
Trust Headquarters, East Surrey Hospital,
Canada Avenue, Redhill, Surrey RH1 5RH
Telephone: **01737 768511**
Web: www.surreyandsussex.nhs.uk

The Patient Advice & Liaison Service can be contacted on telephone **01737 231958**.

This leaflet can be provided in other languages and formats upon request. Please telephone 01737 231958 or email pals@sash.nhs.uk

Esta informação está disponível em outros idiomas e formatos, incluindo letras maiores. Para auxílio contactar 01737 231958.

我們可以用其他語言和格式來提供這些資料，包括大字體。欲獲得協助，請致電 01737 231958

આ માહિતી બીજી અન્ય ભાષાઓમાં અને સ્વરૂપોમાં ઉપલબ્ધ થશે, જેમાં મોટા અક્ષરોનો સમાવેશ કરેલ છે. મદદ માટે સંપર્ક કરો 01737 231958

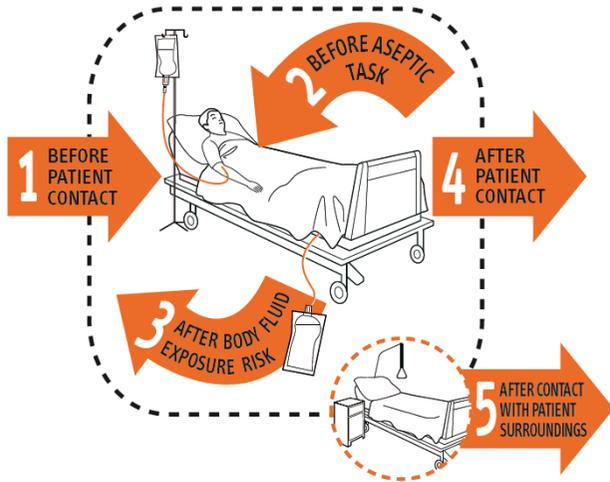
مات دوسری زبانوں اور صورتوں میں بھی مل سکتی ہے جن میں بڑے حروف میں لکھی گئی عبارت شامل ہے، مدد لینے کے لئے 01737 231958 پر فون کریں۔

Leaflet produced by IPCAS Team in April 2013
Review date: April 2015
MR6073A

Discharge of patients with *C. difficile*

information for patients, carers, relatives and visitors

Your 5 moments for HAND HYGIENE



From *Guide to Implementation of the World Health Organisation's Multimodal Hand Hygiene Improvement Strategy* (revised Aug 2009)

