

# Infection Control

## Pathogen Primer

### Clostridium Difficile

#### Clostridium Difficile Explained

Clostridium Difficile (C. Diff.) is a bacterium that causes colitis, or inflammation of the colon.

How you get sick from C. Diff

C. Diff. bacteria are found in feces. People become infected if they touch items or surfaces contaminated with feces and then touch their mouth or mucous membranes. Healthcare workers can also spread the bacteria through their hands to other patients or onto surfaces.

Information about C. Diff.:

- Everyone naturally has C. Diff. bacteria living in their colon, but they are suppressed by other bacteria present in the colon.
- C. Diff. typically lives in a dormant spore form, meaning it can live for very long periods on surfaces.
- Symptoms of C. Diff. infection include: watery diarrhea, fever, nausea, and abdominal pain.

#### Other Information:

Patients undergoing treatment with antibiotics can be more susceptible to C. Diff. infection.

#### Infection Control Strategies:

Current CDC Guidance for treating C-Diff from a cleaning and disinfecting perspective is summarized as follows:

Isolate patients with C-Diff or suspected C-Diff related illness. Follow all facility isolation and contact precautions.

Use a two step process for environmental cleaning and disinfecting. First, clean surfaces with an appropriate cleaner. This could be a quaternary disinfectant. Second, wipe all surfaces with an EPA registered sporicidal disinfectant with specific claims for killing C-Diff Spores. Several different types of sporicidal products are currently available as indicated below:

**Hypochlorite Bleach:** EPA registered bleach with a C-Diff Spore claim. Effective, but bleach odors and potential damage to surfaces are a draw back.

**Peracetic Acid-Hydrogen Peroxide:** These disinfectants also have C-Diff Spore Claims. Drawback is vinegar odor and also may be a respiratory irritant if sprayed.

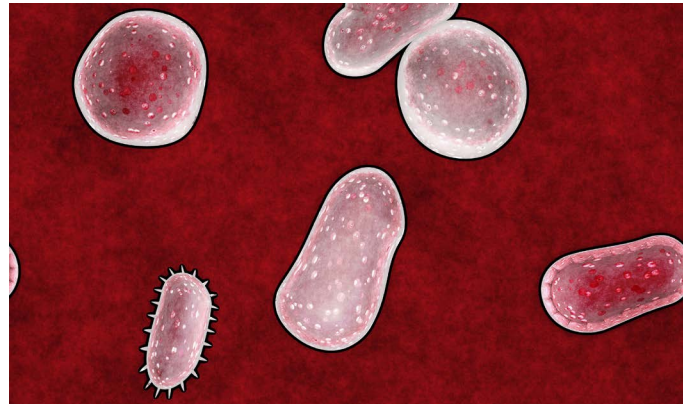
#### Procedures

A. Dedicated mops and equipment are usually required.

Also, never bring a cleaning cart into a room with suspect or known cases of CDAD.

B. Use cleaning cloths pre-soaked in a solution of Century Q 256 (properly diluted) to clean environmental surfaces. Surfaces should remain wet after cleaning and allowed to air dry.

C. After environmental surfaces have dried, use cloths that have been soaked in the hypochlorite (bleach) solution. If the product is an EPA registered disinfectant, use according to label instructions.



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