

What you can do

You can help to avoid the transmission of C. diff by:

- washing your hands after using the toilet or commode and before you eat
- keeping your bed space tidy and uncluttered to make cleaning easier for ward staff
- asking staff and visitors to wash their hands before and after seeing you
- asking visitors not to sit on your bed or to use patients' toilets (chairs for visitors are available on every ward)
- not sharing items with other patients unless they have been cleaned
- letting the ward staff know if you have had C. diff or GDH in the past

What precautions are needed at home?

Having a GDH positive result will not stop you from going home if you are well. It is important to tell your GP or healthcare provider of your GDH positive result when you see them in the future, especially if you receive antibiotic treatment.

We will also inform your GP of your GDH positive result.

If you have any questions or concerns, please ask your nurse for advice or ask to speak to a member of the Infection Prevention Team.

References

If you require a full list of references for this leaflet please email patient.information@ulh.nhs.uk

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If you require this information in another language, large print, audio (CD or tape) or braille, please email the Patient Information team at patient.information@ulh.nhs.uk



Clostridium difficile

GDH positive - Toxin negative (Glutamate Dehydrogenase)

Infection Prevention Team

www.ulh.nhs.uk

What is Clostridium difficile (C. diff)?

C. diff is a bacterium present in the bowel of approximately 3% of healthy adults. It rarely causes problems as it is kept under control by the normal bacteria in the bowel. However, when antibiotics are given, the balance can be disturbed and the C. diff bacteria can multiply rapidly.

What is GDH positive?

GDH is the abbreviation for glutamate dehydrogenase, which is a chemical found in C. diff.

A stool sample is tested in 2 stages to detect the presence of this chemical. If the chemical is found the result is termed **GDH positive**.

What does GDH positive result mean for me?

If you have a GDH positive result, a second test is performed to look for toxins which are produced when C. diff is causing an infection.

If the second stage of the testing shows that you **do not** have the toxins present, this means you **do not** have a C. diff infection, but that you **carry** the C. diff bacteria in your bowel (are GDH positive).

What is the treatment?

Once a diagnosis has been made, your doctor will review your medication and make any necessary changes, especially to any antibiotics you may be taking.

One of the major adverse effects of antibiotic therapy is that it can *cause* the production of toxins of the C. diff bacteria in patients who are GDH positive.

It is ok to ask your Doctor if the antibiotics you are being given are necessary.

Often patients do not require treatment as they do not have any symptoms. However, if your symptoms are severe your doctor may decide to give you treatment.

What symptoms can I expect with a GDH positive result?

The majority of patients do not have any symptoms. However, one or more of the following may be experienced:

- Watery, foul smelling diarrhoea
- Some patients experience abdominal pain (mild to moderate)
- Some patients may get a raised temperature.

Preventing the spread of the bacteria

It is important to follow good hand hygiene with **soap and water** especially after using the toilet or commode and before eating.

Alcohol sanitiser is not effective at killing C. diff bacteria.

If you are GDH positive you will be nursed in a single room for your stay in hospital.

Staff will wear protective clothing (gloves and aprons), when helping you to wash, toilet and dress. This prevents the spread of the bacteria to other people.

How can my family and friends protect themselves when visiting?

They must wash their hands every time they:

- Leave the single room
- Before preparing food
- Before eating
- After using the toilet.

They should not visit if they are feeling unwell or have recently had diarrhoea.

They should not bring food in to eat whilst visiting.

Visitors should observe any restrictions in place as these help us to make sure the ward is cleaned thoroughly throughout the day.