

# Clostridium Difficile Diarrhoea

## Information for patients and visitors

### Easy Read

#### What is *Clostridium difficile* (*C. diff*)?

*C. diff* are germs that can be part of the normal germs found in your stomach. *C. diff* diarrhoea can happen when antibiotics are used to treat another infection. This is because taking antibiotics can change how germs work in your stomach, causing **diarrhoea**.

#### How will you feel?

- You might have a pain in your stomach, and you will go to the toilet more often.
- Diarrhoea means your poo is very watery.
- Your poo might smell worse than normal.



If you develop *C. diff* in hospital you will be looked after in your own room. This is to stop the infection spreading to other patients.

- When doctors and nurses look after you they will wear gloves and an apron.
  - When they leave the room they will wash their hands.
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## How will I know if I have *C. diff*?

The nurse will ask for a sample of your poo. This will be sent to the laboratory to be tested to see if you have *C. diff*.



## Can *C. diff* be treated?

**Yes.** The antibiotics you are taking may be stopped and different antibiotics to treat *C. diff* given to you instead. You will be given a (probiotic) yogurt drink as part of your treatment. For example, Actimel.

## Can visitors catch *C. diff*?

Most healthy people will not catch *C. diff*. If a visitor is in your room they will be asked to wear gloves and an apron. Visitors should always wash their hands with soap and water when they leave.

## Do I need to stay in hospital?

**No.** You can go home if you are well enough and you do not have diarrhoea too many times a day.

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## How can I help?

- Keeping hands and clothing clean is most important.
- Wash your hands after using the toilet and before meals.
- Try to eat and drink normally.
- Probiotic yogurt drinks can help stop diarrhoea.
- If your clothes get dirty they can be washed at home. They should be washed separately to other clothes, on the hottest wash the fabric will tolerate.
- It is okay for visitors to kiss you and hold your hand but they should wash their hands after.
- Visitors should sit in a chair, not on your bed.
- Your visitors should not visit any other patients in the hospital on the same visit.



**For more information and advice please speak to the ward manager or the Infection Prevention and Control Team.**

### **Infection Prevention and Control Team:**

Maidstone Hospital

☎ 01622 224037


Tunbridge Wells Hospital

☎ 01892 635679

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**More information and advice can be obtained from:**

**NHS 111**



 **111**

**NHS Choices online**

[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

**MTW NHS Trust is committed to making its patient information accessible in a range of languages and formats. If you need this leaflet in another language or format please ask one of your clinical care team or the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). We will do our best to arrange this.**

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust welcomes all forms of feedback from our service users. If the standard of service you have received from the Trust does not meet your expectations, we want to hear from you. Please speak with the ward manager or the nurse in charge in the first instance, or you can contact the **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)** on:

**Telephone:**  01622 224960 or  01892 632953

**Email:** [mtw-tr.palsoffice@nhs.net](mailto:mtw-tr.palsoffice@nhs.net)

**or visit their office** at either Maidstone or Tunbridge Wells Hospital between 9.00am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

You can be confident that your care will not be affected by highlighting any areas of concern or making a complaint. The Trust will retain a record of your contact, which is held separately to any medical records. If you are acting on behalf of a patient, we may need to obtain the patient's consent in order to protect patient confidentiality. More information on PALS or making a complaint can be found on the Trust's website: [www.mtw.nhs.uk](http://www.mtw.nhs.uk) or pick up a leaflet from main reception.

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