

Will this infection stop my recovery and my discharge home?

Whilst symptomatic you may not feel like undertaking rehabilitation activities such as going to the gym or occupational therapy department. When your symptoms subside, there is no reason these activities can't continue. Your discharge will only happen when you are deemed medically fit to go home.

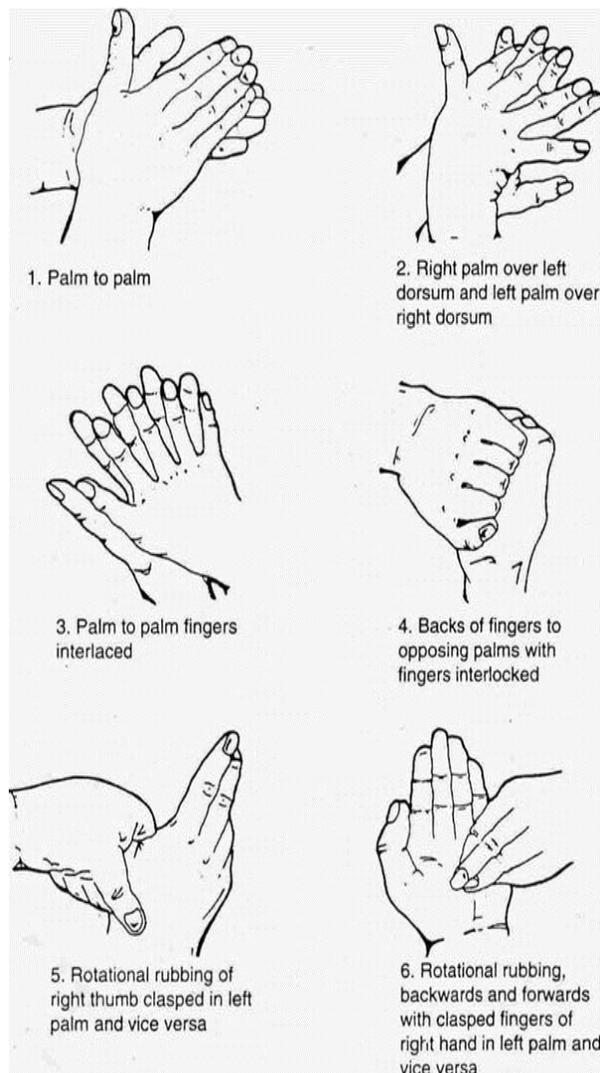
Would you recommend our service to your Friends and Family?

Our staff members are required to ask you if you would recommend our service to family and friends. Your feedback will help us to improve the care and treatment we provide.

Wye Valley NHS Trust
www.wyevalley.nhs.uk
Telephone 01432 355444

What can I do to help myself?

Whilst symptomatic with diarrhoea it is good to drink plenty. It is important to complete the course of antibiotics as instructed. Keep a good standard of personal hygiene, below is the correct technique for washing hands. It is important to wash your hands after going to the toilet and before eating.



Clostridium *difficile* infection information leaflet

Infection prevention team

The Trust's infection prevention team provide a comprehensive service across Wye Valley NHS Trust acute and community healthcare services.

Please contact the team on 01432 355444 extension 5133 if you would like more information.

What is *Clostridium difficile*?

Clostridium difficile is a type of bacteria (bug) which lives in the large intestine (part of the gut). Many of us have it in our bodies without it causing any problems. It normally does not make us ill, but if the bacteria in the gut is disturbed as happens when having a course of antibiotics, the *Clostridium difficile* bacteria multiply. They produce a toxin which irritates the bowel giving the symptoms of diarrhoea.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms will vary from patient to patient, but you may have:

- Diarrhoea.
- Fever.
- Loss of appetite.
- Feeling sick.
- Tummy ache or discomfort.

How do I know I have got it?

Your medical history may trigger suspicion of infection and a sample of your faeces will be obtained for laboratory testing.

How is it treated?

Your doctor will review your medication and stop any drugs that may contribute to your condition. You will be started on a course of antibiotics. It may take a few days for these to be effective and alternatives can be tried if symptoms continue.

How is it spread?

These bacteria produce spores when they are outside the body. These have a tough coating and can survive for long periods in the environment. These spores can be picked up when touching contaminated surfaces and not washing your hands before eating food.

Why do I need to be in a room on my own?

This reduces the risk of other vulnerable patients becoming symptomatic, and in turn reduces their risk of developing an infection. Medical and nursing staff will wear gloves and aprons when delivering your care. They should wash their hands with soap and water under a running tap.

How long do I have to be in my own room?

It is preferable that you remain in the side room till you are discharged. You may come out of the room when you

have not had diarrhoea for 48 hours.

Can I still have visitors?

Relatives and friends may still visit; they should wash their hands with soap and water when leaving the room. If they help with your care they may wish to wear gloves and aprons when doing so.

What happens to my laundry?

In hospital your bed linen will be dealt with differently; it will be placed in a red soluble bag, then a white laundry bag. If your personal clothing is taken home, it should be fed directly into the washing machine with minimal handling and washed at the highest temperature that the material can withstand.

Do I have to tell anyone about having had *Clostridium difficile*?

Your GP will be informed of you having had this infection via your discharge letter. However, if you require antibiotics in the future, it is worth mentioning that you have had *Clostridium difficile* infection in the past. This may determine the antibiotic that you are given. If you develop symptoms of diarrhoea again then discuss this with your GP, especially if it is after a course of antibiotics.