

C. diff: Guidance for Shared Bathrooms

When resources allow, it is a best practice to designate a bathroom to individuals with *Clostridioides difficile* (*C. diff*) infection. *C. diff* is a germ that causes diarrhea and inflammation of the colon. This information is intended for group home and home care settings that have shared bathrooms.



C. diff Facts

- ❖ *C. diff* is a bacteria found in the gastrointestinal tract that can cause colitis (inflammation of the colon), fever, stomach pain, loss of appetite, nausea, diarrhea and dehydration.
- ❖ Antibiotic use can lead to a *C. diff* infection.
- ❖ Infection can be life threatening for those with weakened immune systems.
- ❖ *C. diff* has a protective layer, forming a “spore” that makes it difficult to kill in the environment. These infectious spores can spread to others from contaminated surfaces and hands.



Hand Hygiene & Personal Protective Equipment

- ❖ Washing with soap and water is the **preferred** method to remove *C. diff* spores from hands. Hand washing works by creating friction between hands and lifting spores off the hands to lessen the chance of spreading it.
- ❖ When caring for those with *C. diff* infections, gloves and gowns should be disposable and changed when visibly soiled, between dirty and clean tasks and between residents. It should be removed prior to exiting room and discarded in a proper container. Hand washing should be performed after removing all PPE.
- ❖ Educate ill individuals about the importance of proper hand hygiene after using the restroom and before eating.



Cleaning and Disinfection

- ❖ The environment should be cleaned and disinfected thoroughly with a **sporicidal** product, or a bleach mixture, after use by the infected individual.
 - See [EPA's List K](#) for a list of these products. Be sure to adhere to contact time of the product.
 - You can also make a bleach mixture at home. Mix 1 part bleach to 9 parts water.
- ❖ Always work systematically from cleanest to dirtiest and from top to bottom.
- ❖ Pay extra attention to high-touch surfaces such as doorknobs, faucet handles, toilet flush handles, toilet seats, and walls or toilet safety rails.
- ❖ When cleaning, don't forget to wear your gloves and wash your hands with soap and water after removing and discarding gloves.
- ❖ Additional information can be found here:
 - [C. diff Prevention-Information for Patients](#)
 - [CDC Environmental Cleaning Procedures](#)



Additional Tips

- ❖ Set up a communication system to notify staff, residents, and visitors that the bathroom has been used and needs to be cleaned. This may include signage, frequent rounding, call system, or another method of communication.
- ❖ Infected individuals should shower instead of taking a bath when possible, in order to wash spores down the drain quickly.

