



Clostridium difficile associated diarrhea (CDAD)

Description

Clostridium difficile is a bacterium living in the intestine in balance with the other bacteria. Due to factors such as antibiotics, advanced age, a inflammatory bowel disease or recent surgery, the number of good bacteria can decrease and thus promote the growth of *Clostridium difficile*. The bacterium then produces a toxin that irritates the intestine and causes diarrhea.

About 5% of the population can be a carrier of this bacterium. People who have health problems and who are hospitalized are most at risk of developing *Clostridium difficile*-associated diarrhea (CDAD).

Symptoms

- Diarrhea (loose stools)
- Cramps or abdominal pain
- Fever

Complications can occur in some vulnerable individuals, ranging from dehydration to severe inflammation of the intestine.

Transmission Modes

- Direct contact: reach his mouth his hands were infected after contact with a person who has symptoms of CDAD
- Indirect contact: wear his hands to his mouth that touching surfaces or objects contaminated with the bacteria (e.g. nightstand, faucets, door handle)

The sick person is contagious from the onset of symptoms and up to 72 hours after the return to normal bowel movements. It is not necessary to make a checkup when diarrhea has stopped. If symptoms continue or recommence in the following weeks, a medical consultation is required.

Clostridium difficile can live for several months outside the human body. Also, more diarrhea are frequent, the environment will be contaminated. Cleaning and disinfection is essential then (see instructions overleaf).





Diarrhea associated with *Clostridium difficile*

Treatment

- In general, mild and moderate diarrhea subside without treatment
- Severe diarrhea requiring antibiotic treatment

Infection prevention and control measures

Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, by rubbing vigorously all surfaces:

- before preparing, handling, serving or eating food
- after using the toilet
- when hands are visibly soiled
- before and after giving care to a person suffering from CDAD
- after contact with the environment of a person suffering from CDAD

Clean and disinfect the environment with 1 part bleach diluted in 9 parts of water.

Wash clothes habitually with a current detergent using hot or warm water. The stained fabrics with feces should be washed separately.

During hospitalization in health care settings, additional precautions can be put in place to prevent the transmission of *Clostridium difficile*.

Notice

This information does not in any way replace the advice of a health professional. If you have questions about your health, call Info-Santé 811 or consult a healthcare professional.