

***Clostridium difficile* Infections**

(CDI)

Clinical Description:

Older adults who take antibiotics and also receive medical care are most at risk for acquiring CDI. Infection with *Clostridium difficile* (*C. difficile*) can result in symptoms ranging from asymptomatic carriage, watery diarrhea, pseudomembranous colitis, sepsis and death.

Incubation Period:

The incubation period is unknown.

Mode of Transmission:

C. difficile is acquired from the environment or from stool of another colonized or infected individual by the fecal-oral route.

Period of Communicability:

The ability of *C. difficile* to form spores allows the bacteria to survive in the environment for weeks or months.

Exclusion/Reporting:

Children are at a lower risk for CDI. Infected children and staff should receive care from a provider. Ill persons with *C. difficile* diarrhea should be excluded for the duration of diarrhea. Infection control measures should be enforced.

Prevention/Care:

Meticulous hand hygiene, especially after using the restroom and before eating, is the most important factor for decreasing transmission of CDI. Washing hands with soap and water is more effective in removing *C. difficile* spores. Regular, scheduled cleaning of surfaces in restrooms with bleach or another EPA-approved, spore-killing disinfectant is advised. A designated restroom should be considered for an infected child thus assuring appropriate hand hygiene and immediate surface cleaning upon use of the restroom.

Outbreaks:

According to the ISDH Communicable Disease Reporting Rule (410 IAC 1-2.3) the definition of an outbreak means cases of disease occurring in a community, region, or particular population at a rate in excess of that which is normally expected. The local health department should be notified of suspected and/or documented cases of CDI if the number of cases is in excess of what is normally experienced in your school or occur with a common connection (same class, sports team, etc.). For additional information and recommendations regarding the preparation for, and the management of an outbreak situation in a school setting, see Appendix A, "Managing an Infectious Disease Outbreak In a School Setting."

Other Resources

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

http://www.cdc.gov/HAI/organisms/cdiff/Cdiff_infect.html

Indiana State Department of Health Quick Facts Page (found on disease/condition page):

<http://bit.ly/12IJLfd>