What is *C.difficile*?

C.difficile and its spores, is one of the many bacteria present in the gut and feces of a person. Some people may carry *C.difficile* in their gut without any signs or symptoms.

Antibiotics are medications that help fight an infection. However, these medications also destroy the good bacteria allowing *C.difficile* to grow. When *C. difficile* bacteria is present in unusually high number, they also produce toxins that can damage the gut, cause diarrhea and make the person sick.

C.difficile is the most common cause of infectious diarrhea in hospitals or long-term care homes.

What are the symptoms of *C.difficile* infection?

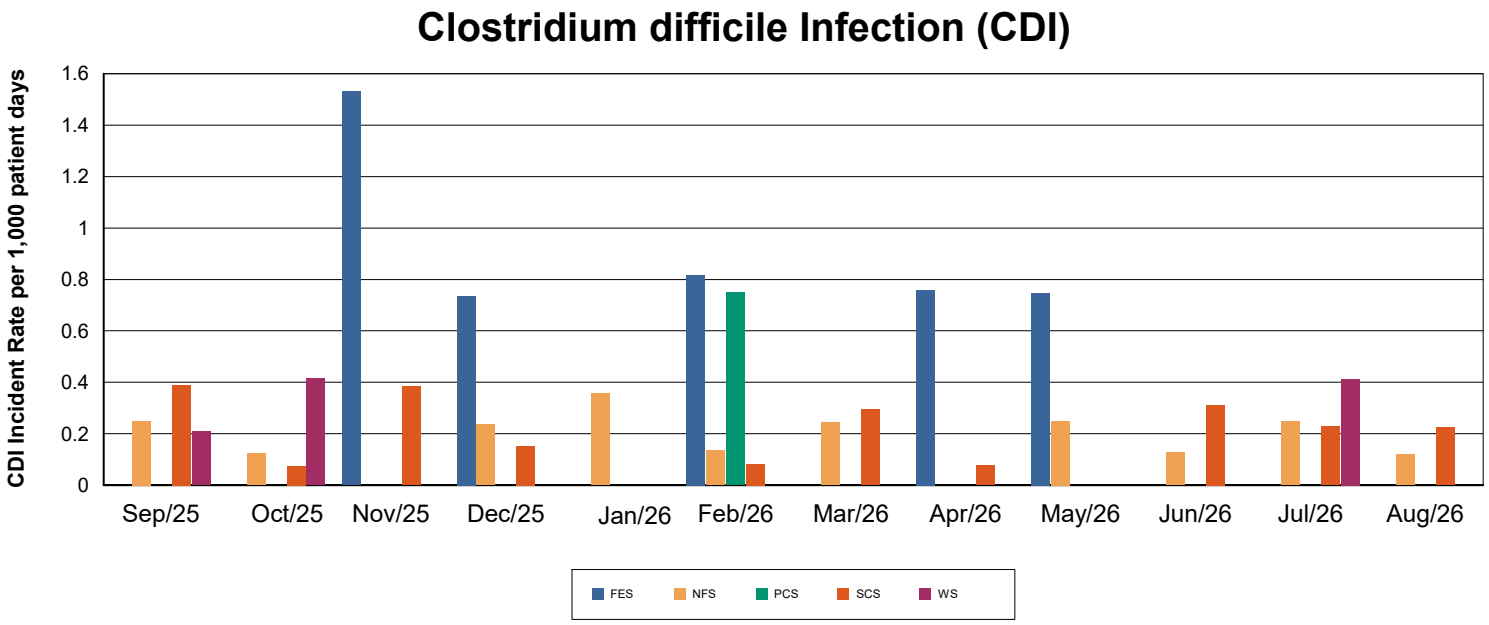
Symptoms can range from mild to severe diarrhea, fever, abdominal pain or tenderness. In severe infections, *C.difficile* may cause death.

How does *C.difficile* spread in a health care setting?

When a person has *C. difficile* infection, the bacteria in the feces can contaminate surfaces such as toilet, commode chair, bed, chair, bedpans, or door handles. When touching these items, the hands can also become contaminated. When hands and equipment are not cleaned properly, *C. difficile* can be spread to you, others and other surfaces.

***C.difficile* Indicator**

Niagara Health monitors the trend of healthcare-associated *C. difficile* cases (expressed in rate/1000 patient days) and recommends strategies to prevent and control the spread of infection.



	2025/26							2026/27				
	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
FES	0.00	0.00	1.53	0.74	0.00	0.82	0.00	0.76	0.75	0.00	0.00	0.00
NFS	0.25	0.12	0.00	0.24	0.36	0.14	0.24	0.00	0.25	0.13	0.25	0.12
PCS	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.75	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
SCS	0.39	0.08	0.38	0.15	0.00	0.08	0.30	0.08	0.00	0.31	0.23	0.23
WS	0.21	0.42	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.41	0.00

What is NH doing to prevent *C. difficile* infection?

We continue to promote and implement appropriate infection prevention and control strategies, which include but not limited to the following:

- Monitor, identify and implement additional precautions for patients with *C.difficile;*
- Promote and review appropriate use of antibiotics;
- Ensure accessibility and visibility of hand hygiene resources to promote hand hygiene compliance;
- Monitor hand hygiene compliance of staff, physicians and volunteers in accordance with the Four Moments for Hand Hygiene;
- Adhere to best practice standards in environmental cleaning and equipment hygiene;
- Ongoing education of patients, staff and volunteers