



C. diff

Your child may have been exposed to *Clostridioides difficile*, commonly referred to as *C. diff*. *C. Diff* is a bacterium that causes diarrhea and inflammation of the colon.

If you think your child has *C. diff*:

- Tell your childcare provider or call the school.
- Keep your child home from childcare until 24 hours after diarrhea has stopped. Most children will get better on their own without medication.
- School-aged children do not have to stay home unless they are not feeling well enough to participate in routine activities or are having toileting accidents.
- For more information, call Hennepin County Epidemiology at 612-543-5230 or your local health department.

Parent/Guardian information

Symptoms

Your child may have diarrhea, fever, stomach pain, loss of appetite, or nausea.

Spread

- By touching hands, objects, or surfaces contaminated with stool.

Contagious period

Your child is contagious if the bacteria is in their stool. Many children will have the bacteria in their stool without being sick.

Call your health care provider

If anyone in your home has:

- Three or more watery diarrhea stools a day
- Diarrhea for more than 2 days
- Symptoms of dehydration

Prevention

- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm running water especially after using the bathroom, handling soiled diapers, and prior to eating or preparing food. Thorough handwashing is the best way to prevent the spread of communicable diseases.

C. diff

- Clean and disinfect surfaces and laundry when someone is sick in the household.
- Wear gloves when cleaning, diapering, and doing soiled laundry. Always wash hands after removing gloves.
- Take a shower with soap and water to remove bacteria on the skin.
- Clean and sanitize mouthed toys, objects, and surfaces at least daily and when soiled (see Section 2).
- Alcohol-based sanitizers are not effective in killing *C. diff* spores. Soap and water are more effective.

Hennepin County Public Health
Epidemiology
612-543-5230
epi-envhlth@hennepin.us

Updated May 2025

