

CDC Vital Signs

Stop *C. difficile* Infections

[Announcer] This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

C. difficile is a germ that causes diarrhea linked to 14,000 deaths in the US each year. People who get medical care *and* take antibiotics are most at risk for infection, especially older adults. Identifying *C. difficile* infection early and stopping its spread can save lives.

Here are six steps for prevention in medical settings:

One - Prescribe antibiotics only when appropriate.

Two - Test for *C. difficile* when patients have diarrhea within several months of taking antibiotics.

Three - Isolate those who test positive.

Four – Since hand washing may not be sufficient and hand sanitizers don't kill *C. difficile* spores, wear gloves and gowns when treating infected patients.

Five - Disinfect treatment areas with products approved to kill *C. difficile*; and

Six - When patients are transferred, notify the new facility of *C. difficile* infection.

Learn more at www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.