

## What is a *C. diff* (*Clostridioides difficile*) Infection?

*C. diff*, also known as *C. difficile*, is a bacterial spore infection of the gut that causes diarrhea and may be fatal. People who have other illnesses, conditions, are elderly, or may require prolonged use of antibiotics, are at greater risk of getting a *C. diff* infection.

*C. diff* is found in feces of people with active infection, and sometimes in people without active infection who happen to be carriers of the bacteria. People can become infected after touching items or surfaces that are not cleaned properly, and therefore are contaminated with the bacteria, by touching their mouth, eyes, or nose. Health care workers can spread the bacteria to patients or contaminate surfaces through hand contact.

What are we doing at Sharon Regional Medical Center to prevent *C. diff* infections? Our team of doctors, nurses, and other healthcare providers are:

- Performing hand hygiene by cleaning their hands with soap and water after caring for every patient with *C. diff*
- Carefully cleaning hospital rooms and medical equipment that have been used for patients with *C. diff*
- Prescribing and giving antibiotics to patients only when medically necessary

Additionally, our teams are using these precautions to prevent *C. diff* from spreading to other patients by:

- Giving patients with *C. diff* their own private room or sometimes sharing a room with someone who also has *C. diff*
- Our healthcare teams put on gloves, wear a gowns, and perform soap and water hand hygiene while taking care of patients with *C. diff*

