

# Clostridioides difficile

## GDH positive – Toxin negative (Glutamate Dehydrogenase)

Reference Number: ULHT-LFT-2559 v2

Issued: August 2023

Review Date: August 2026



## What is *Clostridioides difficile*?

*Clostridioides difficile* is a bacteria that is found in the bowel of about 3% of healthy adults. It rarely causes problems as it is kept under control by the normal bacteria in the bowel. However, when antibiotics are prescribed the balance is disturbed allowing C.diff bacteria to multiply.

## What is GDH positive?

GDH is an abbreviation for Glutamate Dehydrogenase which is a chemical found in *Clostridioides difficile*. When a patient has diarrhoea a stool (poo) sample is tested in two stages to detect the presence of this chemical and if found is termed GDH positive.

## What does a GDH positive result mean to me?

This means that you do not have a *Clostridioides difficile* infection but you carry the *Clostridioides difficile* bacteria in your bowel.

## What is the treatment?

Once the diagnosis has been made, your doctor will review the medication you are currently taking and make any necessary changes, this may mean a change to antibiotic therapy.

## Is it ok to ask your doctor if the antibiotics you are being given are necessary?

Often patients do not require treatment if they do not have any symptoms, however, if your symptoms cause concern then the doctor may decide to give you treatment.

## What symptoms can I expect with a GDH result?

Your stool (poo) will have been tested because you have diarrhoea. Some patients experience abdominal pain, (mild to moderate) and some patients have a raised temperature.

## Preventing the spread of infection

It is important to follow good hand hygiene with soap and water especially after using the toilet or commode and before eating.

## Alcohol hand sanitiser is not effective in destroying *Clostridioides difficile* bacteria

If you are GDH positive and have symptoms of diarrhoea you will be nursed in a single room during your hospital stay. Staff will wear protective clothing, (gloves and aprons) when helping you wash, toilet and dress. This reduces the risk of spreading the bacteria to other people.

## How can my family and friends protect themselves?

- They must wash their hands every time they leave the single room, before preparing food, before eating and after using the toilet
- They should not visit if they feel unwell or have recently had diarrhoea.
- They should not bring food to eat whilst visiting

## Visitors

Visitors should observe any visiting restrictions in place as these will help us ensure the ward environment is cleaned thoroughly throughout the day.

## What you can do

You can help reduce the transmission of *Clostridioides difficile* by:

- Washing your hands after using the toilet or commode and before you eat
- keeping your bed space tidy and uncluttered to make cleaning easier for ward staff
- letting the ward staff know if you see any dust or dirt
- asking staff and visitors to wash their hands before and after seeing you
- asking visitors not to sit on your bed (chairs for visitors are available on every ward) or to use patients' toilets
- not sharing items with other patients unless they have been cleaned
- letting the ward staff know if you have had *Clostridioides difficile* infection or diagnosed as GDH previously

## What precautions are needed at home?

Having a GDH positive result will not stop you from going home if you are well. It is important to tell your GP or healthcare provider of your GDH result when you see them in the future. We will also inform your GP of your GDH positive result.

If you have any questions or concerns, please ask your nurse for advice or speak to a member of the Infection Prevention Team.

Infection Prevention Team

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