

# Antibiotic Side Effects Are Contagious – C. Diff Infections Are On the Rise

The gut microbiome is getting some recognition lately. Scientists are finding increasing evidence that the delicate balance of the gut is responsible for making and keeping us healthy. The focus of the microbiome has turned attention to antibiotics and the damage we are doing by overusing them. Antibiotics disrupt the natural balance of the gut, destroying beneficial bacteria and allowing pathogens to thrive unchecked. If you're not using prescription antibiotics there are plenty of other sources you're likely getting it from.

*A microbiota is "the ecological community of commensal, symbiotic and pathogenic microorganisms that literally share our body space"- Wikipedia*

## The Nitty-Gritty

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C. diff is a bacteria that inflames the colon and is spread by spores from person to person. C. diff exists throughout organic environments (water, air, human and animal waste, earth, and food products) and for some people, the bacteria can exist in the intestine without ever making its host sick. When it does cause an infection, symptoms range from watery diarrhea and mild cramping to more severe cramping and diarrhea, kidney failure, fever, and dehydration. Potentially deadly, C. diff is especially common in hospital settings due to the widespread use of antibiotics. Much like Candida, C. diff thrives when antibiotics wipe the good bacteria from the

intestine, leaving it unable to fight off the infection. *C. diff* is also quite hardy, and the spores that spread it can survive outside of the body for up to 90 days.

## **With the Rise of Antibiotics Comes the Rise of Everyday Infections**

Overprescribed to humans and animals, antibiotics have invaded our lives in multiple ways, forcing crafty bacteria, fungi, and viruses to adapt. The recommended conventional treatment for *C. diff* is antibiotics, which seems crazy, as antibiotics created the ideal environment for *C. diff* to thrive.

Rates of *C. diff* infections are rising in and out of hospitals and in populations not traditionally susceptible to it, like children or people without a history of antibiotic use. So why is it spreading to these populations? The reason behind the increase of *C. diff* infections in children can be explained by the increasing amounts of antibiotics they're exposed to both internally and environmentally.

Even if you aren't using antibiotics yourself, a recent study found that occupying the same hospital room as someone who has been given antibiotics increases your likelihood of developing a bacterial infection like *Clostridium difficile colitis* (or *C. diff*).

The world seems determined to impact our health through antibiotics in one way or another. The idea that someone taking antibiotics in the same room as you is enough to increase your chance of a bacterial infection is scary. Also scary; the question why does it affect you. If antibiotics have the potential to do that much damage to our vital and not even fully understood microflora, what have we been doing to ourselves and when is the bottom going to fall out of this whole thing?

# Taking a Step Back

So let's take a step back from antibiotics. If you're reading this, on this website, you've probably started choosing the meat you eat very carefully, if you even eat meat at all. A diet consisting of fresh, raw, organic produce (big, beautiful salads with over twenty veggies in them) gives your body and immune system the nutrition it needs, and exercise also plays a part. In the event a bacterial or fungal infection occurs, paying attention to your body and catching it early gives you the chance to take care of yourself.

Of course, that isn't everything, and sometimes we eat something we shouldn't or there's a particularly nasty little bug hanging around. Supplements like Oil of Oregano, Coptis Chinesis, or a good Detox can provide relief. Antibiotics are not your first answer. Antibiotics were designed as a medicine of last resort, so make them that.

## Related Reading:

- *How to Detoxify and Heal the Lymphatic System*
- *Candida, Gut Flora, Allergies, and Disease*
- *Gluten, Candida, Leaky Gut Syndrome, and Autoimmune Diseases*
- *Holistic Guide to Healing the Endocrine System and Balancing Our Hormones*
- *How to Cure Lyme Disease, and Virtually Any Other Bacterial Infection, Naturally*

## Sources:

- *Antibiotics Encourage Spread of C.diff To Subsequent Patients Who Occupy the Same Bed and Haven't Received Antibiotics* – MedicalResearch.com
- *Receipt of Antibiotics in Hospitalized Patients and Risk for Clostridium difficile Infection in Subsequent Patients Who Occupy the Same Bed* – The JAMA Network

- *C. Difficile Infection* – Mayo Clinic
- *Consumer Reports Names Hospitals With High C. Diff Infection Rates* – [consumerreports.org](http://consumerreports.org)