



Clostridioides difficile **GDH positive (Glutamate Dehydrogenase)** – toxin negative

i Important information for
all patients who have been
diagnosed with GDH.

About this booklet

The purpose of this booklet is to give you information about Glutamate Dehydrogenase (GDH). You have been given this because you have had a 'GDH Positive' test result.

What is *Clostridium difficile*?

Clostridioides difficile (previously referred to as *Clostridium difficile*) and commonly called C.diff. is a bacteria present in the bowel of approximately 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 given, the balance of bacteria in the bowel can sometimes be disturbed, causing the C.diff to multiply rapidly.

What is GDH?

GDH is the abbreviation for Glutamate dehydrogenase, which is a chemical found in C.diff.

The Department of Health has recommended a two stage testing process to identify:

1. Whether you have C.diff in your bowel and
2. Whether it is causing you an infection.

The test for GDH on stool samples is an initial screening test to detect the presence of the chemical. If the chemical is found, the result is termed '**GDH positive**' which means C.diff is present in the bowel.

What does a GDH positive result mean for me?

If the result is GDH positive a second test is performed to look for toxins that are produced when C diff is actually causing an infection.

If the second stage of the testing shows that you **do not** have the toxins present, this means you do not have a C.diff infection, but that you carry the C.diff bacteria in your bowel.

The diarrhoea you are experiencing is probably due to other causes, e.g. antibiotics; however, if the diarrhoea continues, further samples may need to be tested.

What happens next?

Once the GDH positive result has been identified, your doctor will review your medication and make any necessary changes, especially to antibiotics as they may cause the C.diff bacteria to start producing toxins.

The majority of patients do not require treatment due to a GDH positive result. However, if your symptoms are very severe your doctor may decide to give you treatment.

It is important to drink plenty whilst you have diarrhoea to stop yourself becoming dehydrated. Your doctor or nurse will advise you how much you should drink as some patients are fluid restricted.

Prevention and Control of Infection Precautions

Even If you do not have a C.diff infection, it is still possible for the bacteria present in your bowel to spread from person to person. This is because the bacteria from the bowel can spread in the environment, contaminating flat surfaces, equipment, bathrooms, toilets and shower facilities etc. This is more of a risk of contamination whilst suffering from diarrhoea.

To avoid the spread of the bacteria strict hand hygiene measures and thorough cleaning is essential.

Washing your hands using soap and water is essential.

Alcohol hand gel is not effective at killing the C.diff bacteria.

To avoid the spread of infection staff caring for you will wear an apron and gloves and wash their hands using soap and water. You should wash your hands with soap and water after using the toilet and before eating.

In hospital, patients who are GDH positive and have diarrhoea will be cared for in a single room, with either en-suite facilities or their own nominated commode. Look out for an infection control notice displayed on the door which alerts and advises all patients, staff and visitors to the required precautions.

These special precautions are required to stay in place until you have passed normal stools for **48 hours**.

How can your family and friends protect themselves when visiting?

1. Hands must be washed with soap and water when leaving the room.
2. Visitors do not need to wear gloves and aprons when visiting unless providing direct care to the patient.
3. Visitors should not visit if they are unwell or have recently had diarrhoea.
4. Avoid sitting on hospital beds when visiting.
5. Do not bring in food to eat whilst visiting.
6. **Observe any restrictions that are in place.**

For further advice or information, please:

- Speak to your doctor or nurse on the ward or department.
- Speak to the hospital prevention and control of infection team, telephone 0141 951 5808.

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