

LWDH *C. difficile* Rate

Lake of the Woods District Hospital (LWDH) takes your care and your safety very seriously, and we are committed to transparency. If you have any questions about the information below or about our hospital's infection prevention and control program, please contact the Infection Prevention and Control Office at 468-9861 ext 362.

Measuring *Clostridium Difficile* rates

Lake of the Woods District Hospital (LWDH) posts its infection rates online on a monthly basis. On this website, you can find information about hospital-acquired infection rates for *C. difficile*.

What are hospital-acquired infections?

Sometimes when patients are admitted to the hospital, they can get infections. These are called hospital-acquired infections. In the case of *C. difficile*, this may mean that symptoms began 72 hours after admission to the hospital; or that the infection was present at the time of admission but was related to a previous admission to that hospital within the last four weeks.

What is *C. difficile*?

C. difficile (*Clostridium difficile*) is a bacteria. *C. difficile* can be part of the normal bacteria in the large intestine and is one of the many bacteria that can be found in stool (a bowel movement).

A *C. difficile* infection occurs when other good bacteria in the bowel are eliminated or decreased allowing the *C. difficile* bacteria to grow and produce toxin. The toxin produced can damage the bowel and cause diarrhea. *C. difficile* is one example of a hospital-acquired infection and is one of the most common infections found in hospitals and long-term care facilities. *C. difficile* has been a known cause of health care associated diarrhea for about 30 years.

Who is at risk for *C. difficile*?

Healthy people are not usually susceptible to *C. difficile*. Seniors, and people who have other illnesses or conditions being treated with antibiotics and certain other stomach medications, are at greater risk of an infection from *C. difficile*.

What are the symptoms of *C. difficile*?

The usual symptoms are mild but can be severe. Main symptoms are watery diarrhea, fever, abdominal pain /tenderness. In some cases there may not be diarrhea. Blood may or may not be present in the stools.

How do you get *C. difficile*?

C. difficile is the most common cause of hospital associated infectious diarrhea. Since it can be part of the normal bacteria that live in the large intestine, taking antibiotics can change the normal balance of bacteria in your large intestine making it easier for *C. difficile* to grow and cause an infection. Old age and the presence of other serious illnesses may increase the risk of *C. difficile* disease.

How does *C. difficile* spread?

When a person has *C. difficile*, the germs in the stool can soil surfaces such as toilets, handles, bedpans, or commode chairs. When touching these items, your hands can become soiled. If you then touch your mouth, you can swallow the germ. Your soiled hands can spread germs that can survive for a long time on other surfaces if not properly cleaned.

The spread of *C. difficile* occurs due to inadequate hand hygiene and environmental cleaning; therefore, proper control is achieved through consistent hand hygiene and thorough cleaning of the patient environment. Good hand hygiene i.e. washing hands thoroughly and often is the single-most effective way to prevent the spread of infectious diseases like *C. difficile*. Lake of the Woods District Hospital is involved in the Just Clean Your Hands campaign and we believe that hand hygiene is the responsibility of all individuals involved in health care.

How is *C. difficile* treated?

Treatment depends on how sick you are. People with mild symptoms may not need treatment. For more severe disease, antibiotics are required.

What precautions are used to prevent the spread of *C. difficile* in the hospital?

If you are in the hospital and have *C. difficile* diarrhea, you will be put on contact precautions until you are free from diarrhea for at least two days. Your activities outside the room may be restricted. All health care staff who enter your room will wear a gown and gloves. Everyone **MUST** clean their hands when leaving your room.

How does control the spread of *C. difficile*?

The LWDH environmental cleaning is ongoing and conducts twice daily room cleaning for patients requiring Contact Precautions. Hospital grade disinfectants and sporocidal agents are used where necessary. Our cleaning staff is well trained and is dedicated to keeping our hospital cleans and safe for our patients.

Does Lake of the Woods District Hospital track *C. difficile* cases?

The LWDH conducts surveillance on a daily basis for hospital acquired infections including *C. difficile* and reports using the new standardized format for public reporting monthly.

What Lake of the Woods District Hospital is doing to improve patient safety:

LWDH continually strives to identify areas to improve patient safety. Some of the recent initiatives include the Just Clean Your Hands Campaign, LWDH was involved in the pilot of the program and the staff take their responsibility for hand hygiene very seriously. Our cleaning staff is involved in ongoing education and training of isolation rooms and follows the Provincial Infectious Disease Advisory Committees guidelines on best practice standards.

The Infection Prevention and Control Committee that is comprised of physicians, nurses, staff and senior staff continually reviews and revises policies and procedures for minimizing infection risk by following the Provincial Infectious Disease Advisory Committee's (PIDAC) best practice document.

The C. difficile infection rate is calculated as rate per 1,000 patient days.

The "total patient day" represents the sum of the number of days during which services were provided of all inpatients during the given time period.

The rate is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Number of new hospital acquired cases of } c. \text{ difficile in our facility}}{\text{Total number of patient days (for one month)}} \times 1000$$

NOTE: C. difficile rates may vary from month to month: the smaller the facility, the greater the rates may vary – this is because a change in even one case in a Small facility will cause the rate to go up or down considerably.

	August 2008	September 2008	October 2008
Number of new cases of <i>C. difficile</i>	0		
<i>C. difficile</i> rate	0		