

Household Disinfection Program for *Clostridium difficile*



AREAS THAT NEED ATTENTION

BATHROOM
KITCHEN
BEDROOM
CARPETING
VACUUM CLEANER

SUPPLIES YOU WILL NEED

GLOVES
CLOROX BLEACH

STEAM CLEANING
WILL BE REQUIRED
FOR YOUR CARPETS

Introduction

C. difficile exists in two forms: active bacteria and spores. The active bacteria (also known as “vegetative” forms of *C. difficile*) produce toxins when they colonize a person’s colon, which is what makes people sick. The spores are not active, but once awakened can bring the infection back. The spores remain viable for years! We know that patients with history of *C. difficile* infection remain at increased risk of relapse when they get treated with antibiotics for any indication. One possible reason for this increased risk is contamination of their environment with *C. difficile* spores. In our research we discovered that these spores can be located throughout the household. This handout suggests a decontamination protocol for a contaminated household.

Importantly, this protocol was put together based on what we know about *C. difficile* spores and some experiments in the lab. However, it has never been tested in real households. Furthermore, we do not know if this protocol can decrease the risk of *C. difficile* infection recurrence. That would require formal studies and resources that we currently do not have.

CAUTION

Before beginning any procedures, please purchase and use **protective gloves** (Playtex or Similar Gloves).

All areas of the house that are to be disinfected should be **vacuumed** before cleaning begins. This includes floors, counters, plush furniture, and hard surfaced chairs.



Specific Cleaning Instructions

Bathroom



The bathroom is a common reservoir of *C. difficile* spores. Spray or wipe down all surfaces with Clorox Healthcare Bleach Germicidal Cleaner Bottle or Clorox Healthcare Bleach Germicidal Wipes. Be sure to wash down sinks and the interior (bowl) and exterior. Also, wipe clean the toilet water tank top and flushing handle. Thoroughly clean the toilet bowl seat (top and bottom) and area where the seat attaches to the toilet. If any wood is exposed or the seat is cracked, replace with a new one. Also, clean faucet handles, spouts, sink drain and countertops. Be sure to clean doorknobs on both sides of the door. **The bleach solution should be in contact with all materials for at least 3 minutes.**

Clean all floors in the bathroom as well as tubs, backsplash and wall tile with Clorox spray or a 1/10 dilution of Clorox bleach. Allow Clorox to stand for 5 minutes prior to wiping down using disposable wipes.

Be certain NOT to wipe down furniture as surface damage may occur. You may use other wood cleaning products.

Kitchen



Wipe down all surfaces with Clorox Healthcare Bleach Germicidal Cleaner Trigger Spray Bottle or Clorox Healthcare Bleach Germicidal Wipes. Be sure to wash down sinks, water faucet, and refrigerator handles. Wipe down countertops and drawer pulls and knobs.

If not tiled, wash floor carefully using a cleaner approved by the floor manufacturer; otherwise use germicidal bleach.

Bedroom



Thoroughly vacuum bed and bedding. Strip bed of all sheets, blankets and covers, and wash in hot water in a commercial washing machine found at a laundry center.

Wipe down metal bed frames and side rails with Clorox wipes. Check to make sure wipes do not discolor wood by testing on a hidden area.



Specific Cleaning Instructions, cont.

Bedroom, cont.

Cover bed with plastic mattress cover prior to reapplying sheets, spreads, and blankets.

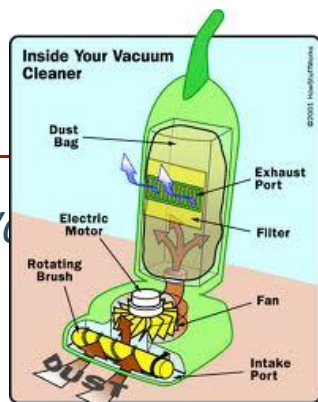
Carpeting



Have all wall-to-wall carpeting and area rugs **steam cleaned**. DO NOT rely on companies that use only chemical cleaners as few chemical products actually kill the spores. We cannot provide any specific commercial service. However, if you hire a commercial service, you should mention that you are trying to eliminate *C. difficile* spores and that they should add Liquid Chlorine Dioxide in their steam water. We discussed this issue with one such commercial cleaner, Ultra Steam Carpet & Upholstery Cleaning, and they seemed understanding. However, we do not have direct experience with their work.

Ultra Steam Carpet & Upholstery Cleaning

6018 Colfax Ave N
 Minneapolis, MN 55430
 Serving Minneapolis and surrounding area
 (763) 543-8658
<http://www.uscarpetcare.us>



Your household vacuum cleaner almost certainly contains *C. difficile* spores. After vacuuming your home, immediately dispose of the bag. If you have a bag-less vacuum, empty reservoir in a trash receptacle and thoroughly wash the dust reservoir first with hot soapy water and then with Clorox disinfectant. If there is a disposable filter, change it