

2023

# C. diff Awareness Month Campaign Toolkit

**seeC.diff**

We reached 16.8  
million with our  
campaign in 2022.

Join us in helping more  
people than ever to **See C. diff.**



PEGGY LILLIS FOUNDATION  
FOR C. DIFF EDUCATION & ADVOCACY

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## Introduction

“See C. diff” is a public education campaign of Peggy Lillis Foundation for C. diff Education & Advocacy (PLF). Launched in 2019, the campaign takes place during C. diff Awareness Month in November. In 2022, we reached 16.8 million people with our campaign, more than ever before. Join us in reaching our 2023 goal of **20 million people!**

We appreciate all of your support and collaboration during C. diff Awareness Month and throughout the year. This toolkit includes resources, key messaging, digital tools, graphics, and more.

Thank you for helping us to raise awareness of this preventable—but too often deadly—disease by sharing our messages and content throughout the month.



"All we have in this world is each other."

– Peggy Lillis

Peggy lost her life to a C. diff infection. She believed we have a duty to care for and fight for each other.



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## Key Events

Join PLF throughout the month of November to spread C. diff awareness, learn more about ways to prevent C. diff, and help us reach our goal of making C. diff rare, treatable, and survivable. Follow us on social media for updates!

Nov

1

### C. diff Awareness Month Kickoff

Join us across all of our **social media channels** to kick off a month of spreading C. diff awareness.

Nov

14

### Twitter (X) Chat: Antibiotic Equity

Chat with PLF alongside CDC, SIDP, SHEA, and the American College of Clinical Pharmacy in a live discussion about the pursuit of optimal antibiotic use for all.

Nov

15

### State of C. diff Town Hall

PLF will host its annual State of C. diff Town Hall featuring presentations by Dr. Paul Feuerstadt and Dr. Stacy Kahn, perspectives from C. diff advocates, and a panel discussion focusing on how we can end harm caused by this preventable infection.

Nov

18-24

### U.S. Antibiotics Awareness Week

Bring attention to the critical need to raise awareness of the threat of antibiotic resistance, the importance of appropriate antibiotic use, and the role antibiotics play in the spread of C. diff.

Also stay tuned for weekly Clinical Facts, Clinical Polling Questions, Faculty Videos, and Patient Clips produced by @Medscape throughout November!

# C. diff Facts

**C. diff is a dangerous infection hiding in plain sight.** C. diff (*Clostridioides difficile*) is a germ that causes diarrhea and inflammation of the colon. Though risk factors include being over 65 and recent healthcare facility stays, anyone can develop a C. diff infection.

**C. diff is the most common healthcare-associated infection.** While hospital-acquired C. diff infections have been decreasing due to federal and state incentives like antibiotic stewardship programs, community-acquired cases continue to rise.

**C. diff can affect anyone.** From someone who recently took antibiotics to people who are immunosuppressed. It is an urgent threat, but it is not treated as such. Without government involvement and coordination across health systems, C. diff goes under-reported and under-resourced.

**Only 40% of Americans have ever heard of C. diff.** Though C. diff kills more Americans each year than HIV, only a third of us have heard of it. Knowledge is key to prevention.

**Antibiotic use is the most common risk factor for C. diff infections.** People who have recently taken antibiotics are at 7-10 times greater risk for contracting C. diff. Limiting antibiotic use when it's unnecessary can prevent C. diff infections and save lives.

**C. diff is costly.** Between 1986 and 2013, CDI was among the top 5 most expensive healthcare-associated infections in the US.

**C. diff is treatable.** Novel and long-standing antibiotics, fecal microbiota transplants, and other therapies are available, if patients can access them. Raising C. diff awareness is also about ensuring that those suffering can find the best therapy as quickly as possible.

**C. diff is largely preventable.** With knowledge, a well-informed patient or caregiver can take action—like ensuring good hand hygiene—to stop its spread.

*For more facts about C. diff, visit [cdiff.org/about-c-diff](https://cdiff.org/about-c-diff)*

## Key Messaging

Our theme for this year's C. diff Awareness Month campaign is **“See C. diff Prevented.”**

Given that a C. difficile infection results mainly from the presence of the bacterium in a degraded gut microbiome, there are multiple opportunities to prevent the infection.

Further, given recent changes in clinical guidelines and advancements in monoclonal antibodies and microbiome restoration therapies, preventing C. diff—both primary and recurrent—is within the reach of every patient.

The following are **7 Opportunities to Prevent C. diff Infections.**



## 7 Opportunities to Prevent C. diff Infections

1

**Avoid Unnecessary Antibiotics.** Nearly 50 percent of antibiotic prescriptions are **medically inappropriate**—which means they are unnecessary, dosed, or misused. Antibiotics cannot treat viral or fungal infections like the common cold or the flu. Taking an antibiotic makes you 7-10 times more likely to get a C. diff infection during and up to a month after treatment. You can help prevent C. diff by ensuring that any antibiotics you and your loved ones take are necessary.

2

**Eat a Microbiome-Supportive Diet.** People with a diverse and robust gut microbiome (the microorganisms, including bacteria, fungi, and viruses, that live in our digestive tracts) are far less susceptible to an initial and recurrent C. diff infection. Whether recovering from a C. diff infection or trying to prevent a recurrence, **a robust gut microbiome is an asset.**

3

**Ensure Accurate Diagnosis.** C. diff infection is a clinical diagnosis, meaning your provider will consider laboratory testing, patient history, and symptoms to determine if you're infected rather than colonized (meaning C. diff bacteria live harmlessly in your gut). There are a variety of tests for C. diff, which differ in sensitivity and accuracy. To rule out colonization, most clinicians look for the presence of the toxins, which most often appear only during an infection. However, current antibiotic use can prevent toxins from registering, so discuss the options with your clinician. You can learn more here: **Getting Diagnosed.**

4

**Learn About C. diff.** Being an informed patient is vital when battling a C. diff infection. C. diff infections can lead to sepsis and even death, particularly when they recur (recurrent C. diff is when a person experiences repeated episodes of infection after initial treatment). Knowledge is power as a patient or caregiver and can help you partner with your clinician more meaningfully. Being educated about C. diff can also help prevent spreading the bacteria in your household. If you or a loved one is battling a CDI, check out our **C. diff Care Guide.**



## 7 Opportunities to Prevent C. diff Infections

5

**Take the Proper Precautions.** If you or your loved one is fighting C. diff, one of the most important things you can do for the safety of yourselves and others is to use good infection control practices to keep from spreading the disease or enabling recurrent C. diff. This includes putting on personal protective equipment (PPE) like gowns, gloves, and shoe covers in any healthcare facility before entering the room of someone with C. diff. You should also wash your hands well with soap and warm water before and after using the restroom or preparing food. Hand sanitizer does not kill C. diff, so using soap for skin and bleach products for surfaces is the best way to clean around someone battling an infection. It's also crucial to **close the lid to the toilet** before flushing, whenever possible.

6

**Get the Best Antibiotic.** When it comes to treating C. diff, the first step is using an antibiotic to bring the infection under control. For some patients, this will resolve their infection. However, not all antibiotics are equally effective at treating a C. diff infection. **While vancomycin and fidaxomicin are considered equally effective in treating a first CDI, they differ in avoiding a recurrence.** With vancomycin, 20 to 30 percent of patients will experience a recurrence. Fidaxomicin, meanwhile, has a recurrence rate of nearly half that. Fidaxomicin is more expensive, but it may be worth pushing for it to help prevent a recurrence.

7

**Prevent Additional Recurrences.** Even with the best treatment, recurrent C. diff is a possibility. Until recently, patients battling recurrent C. diff would have to suffer three or more recurrences before being offered a fecal transplant. However, new FDA-approved microbiome restoration therapies (REBYOTA™ and VOWST™) are available after the first recurrence. A monoclonal antibody (bezlotoxumab) is an adjunctive therapy for patients at high risk for C. diff who need antibiotics. Stopping recurrent CDI as soon as possible is vitally important because the risk of sepsis and death increases with each new infection.



## Social Media

### PLF Social Media

Peggy Lillis Foundation has made it simple for you to share C. diff information on social media. We've created graphics and language that you are encouraged to use. Remember to tag PLF and use the hashtags **#cdiffawarenessmonth** and **#seecdiff** when you post!

November is **#cdiffawarenessmonth** and we are working to spread awareness! Learn how to protect yourself from a **#cdiff** infection by visiting [cdiff.org](https://cdiff.org)

**#Cdiff** is our nation's #1 hospital-acquired infection. Help us **#seecdiffprevented** by raising awareness and learning how to prevent infection. Visit [cdiff.org](https://cdiff.org) for more information **#cdiffawarenessmonth**

According to CDC, 50% of antibiotic prescriptions are medically inappropriate. Avoid unnecessary **#antibiotic** use and reduce your risk of **#cdiff**

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/PeggyFoundation>

**Twitter:** @PeggyFund

**Instagram:** @peggyfund

**LinkedIn:** <https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-peggy-lillis-memorial-foundation/>


**YouTube:** <https://www.youtube.com/@PeggyLillisFoundation>

**TikTok:** @Peggy\_Fund



## Graphics


All graphics and images are the sole property of Peggy Lillis Foundation. These materials are meant to be shared and used for educational and awareness raising purposes only. Please use all materials in their original unaltered state with the PLF logo clearly visible. High resolution versions of all images featured in this toolkit plus additional images can be downloaded [here](#).



**C. diff contributes to more than 29,000 deaths annually**

Join the campaign at [cdiff.org](http://cdiff.org)


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**C. diff causes nearly 500,000 infections every year**

Join the campaign at [cdiff.org](http://cdiff.org)

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**People over 65 are more likely to get a C. diff infection**

Join the campaign at [cdiff.org](http://cdiff.org)

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**Anyone who is taking antibiotics or has recently been at a healthcare facility is at risk of C. diff**


Join the campaign at [cdiff.org](http://cdiff.org)

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# see.c.diff 2023 Campaign Toolkit

## C. diff Awareness Month

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**HOUSE CLEANING**  
1 part bleach + 10 parts water  
Wear gloves when using bleach



**DISHWASHING**  
Dish soap + hot water  
Optional to use 1 tsp bleach + 1 gallon water when rinsing




**LAUNDRY**  
Rinse off any stool beforehand  
Set to hottest water + dry on high heat  
Use bleach when possible


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## C. diff Awareness Month


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**FRUITS AND VEGETABLES**  
Fruits and vegetables are rich in nutrients and anti-inflammatory compounds that help support gut health



**GRAINS**  
Grains tend to be high in B vitamins and can be an excellent source of fiber. They're also energy-rich and can be comforting foods that aid in the recovery process



**FERMENTED FOODS**  
Fermented foods are rich in probiotics — the beneficial bacteria that can get wiped out following antibiotic use.

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### YOU KNOW C. DIFF

PEGGY was a mother, sister, kindergarten teacher, union member and

### DIED FROM C. DIFF

*Clostridioides difficile* (or *C. diff*) is the most common healthcare-associated infection, afflicting an estimated 500,000 Americans every year. Learn how to protect yourself and your family at [cdiff.org](http://cdiff.org)

#cdiffawarenessmonth




### YOU KNOW C. DIFF

MARYANN is a wife, mother, regulatory professional, breast cancer survivor, and a

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### YOU KNOW C. DIFF

MINNIE is a wife, mother, Utahn, millennial and a

### C. DIFF SURVIVOR

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#cdiffawarenessmonth




### YOU KNOW C. DIFF

JOSEPH was a son, brother, retired police officer, bodybuilder and

### DIED FROM C. DIFF

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**C. diff Awareness Month**

[www.cdifff.org](http://www.cdifff.org)

**Thank you for  
helping raise  
critical C. diff  
awareness this  
November!**

**seec.diff** **PREVENTED**



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