DEADLY DIARRHEA:  
*C. DIFFICILE* CAUSES IMMENSE SUFFERING, DEATH

**IMPACT**

- **500,000**
  - Caused close to half a million illnesses in one year.

- **C. difficile** comes back at least once in about 1 in 5 patients who get it.

- 1 in 11 people 65 and older died within a month of *C. difficile* infection diagnosis.

**RISK**

- People on antibiotics are 7-10 times more likely to get *C. difficile* while on the drugs and during the month after.

- Being in healthcare settings, especially hospitals or nursing homes.

- More than 80% of *C. difficile* deaths occurred in people 65 and older.

**SPREAD**

- Touching unclean surfaces, especially those in healthcare settings, contaminated with feces from an infected person.

- Dirty hands.

- Failing to notify other healthcare facilities when patients with *C. difficile* transfer from one facility to another.

**PREVENT**

- Improve prescribing of antibiotics.

- Use best tests for accurate results to prevent spread.

- Rapidly identify and isolate patients with *C. difficile*.

- Wear gloves and gowns when treating patient with *C. difficile*. Remember that hand sanitizer doesn’t kill *C. difficile*.

- Clean room surfaces with EPA-approved, spore-killing disinfectant (such as bleach), where *C. difficile* patients are treated.

http://www.cdc.gov/HAI/organisms/cdiff/Cdiff_infect.html

www.cdc.gov/media

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention