

Clostridium difficile

Hazards: *Clostridium difficile* (or C. diff) is a bacterial pathogen that causes diarrhea, foul smelling feces, abdominal pain, and inflammation of the intestines and colon. It is most often the cause of antibiotic-associated diarrhea where antibiotics disrupt the normal intestinal flora allowing C. diff to overgrow.

Risks: Transmission occurs through the fecal-oral route, through contact with contaminated surfaces and objects, and through the ingestion of contaminated food or water. The greatest risk of exposure to *C. difficile* is during cage changes where there is contact with contaminated bedding and cages.

Precautions: Wear PPE during cage changes (gloves, gown, and booties). Use a biosafety cabinet during cage changes. Follow ABSL-2 procedures for bedding disposal. Wash hands after work.

Emergency Response: If you are working in this area and develop symptoms, tell your supervisor and report to Occupational Medicine. Potential exposures and illnesses must be reported to EHRS by your supervisor or manager.