

## *Clostridium difficile*

### Information Leaflet for Patients/Residents Prescribed an Antibiotic Course June 2014

- **Why am I going home on a course of antibiotics?**  
Some infections can take longer than others to treat but it is not necessary for you to stay in hospital for the duration of your course of antibiotics.
- **Where will I get my antibiotics?**  
Your local/community pharmacist will dispense the antibiotics for you.
- **How often should I take my antibiotic?**  
Please follow the instructions on the label that your local pharmacist will attach to the package containing the antibiotics.
- **Is there any special advice for taking these antibiotics?**  
Some antibiotics may need to be taken with food and others before food on an empty stomach. The dispensary label will contain advice on when is best to take the antibiotics. The patient information leaflet inside the package will also contain additional information. Please read this leaflet before taking your antibiotics.
- **What side effects should I look out for?**
  - Nausea or vomiting; these are not allergies but may mean that the antibiotic is not suitable for you at this time. Please see your GP for advice on an alternative suitable antibiotic.
  - Diarrhoea; if diarrhoea occurs whilst taking your antibiotic or in the weeks after you have stopped taking your antibiotic, please see your GP urgently.
  - Rash; this may be a sign of allergy; tell your doctor and the pharmacist if you are allergic to any medicines, even if they are not antibiotics.
- **Are these antibiotics suitable to take with my other medicines?**  
Antibiotics can interfere with how other medicines work. Your local pharmacist will be able to advise on these 'interactions' and recommend a suitable alternative antibiotic to your GP.
- **Can I start new medicines while taking the antibiotics?**  
Likewise if you start any new medicines, either on prescription or over the counter, remind the GP or pharmacist that you are on antibiotics in case of interactions. New medicines could affect how your antibiotics work.

### Further information

[www.hse.ie/go/antibiotics](http://www.hse.ie/go/antibiotics)

[www.hse.ie/handhygiene](http://www.hse.ie/handhygiene)

[www.health.gov.ie/patient-safety/ncec](http://www.health.gov.ie/patient-safety/ncec) National Clinical Guideline No. 3 (Surveillance, Diagnosis and Management of *Clostridium difficile* Infection in Ireland) (June, 2014)

Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) [www.hpsc.ie](http://www.hpsc.ie). Go into the Topics A-Z section of the site and then click *Clostridium difficile*.