

pachydermatis in an intensive care nursery associated with colonization of health care workers' pet dogs. *N Engl J Med* 1998;338:706-711.

Clostridium difficile on a Surgical Service

A study to evaluate the epidemiology of *Clostridium difficile* colitis in a subset of patients admitted specifically to a surgical service was conducted by investigators from Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center and Harvard Medical School in Boston, Massachusetts. *C difficile* colitis is an increasingly prevalent nosocomial infection that can prolong hospitalization and affect patient outcome adversely. Although this disease has been investigated extensively in patients admitted to medical services, the incidence and risk factors for the development of this disease in patients admitted to a surgical service have not been studied.

Over a 5-month period, 21 (5.6%) of 374 patients admitted to the general, vascular, thoracic, and urologic surgery services developed symptomatic *C difficile* colitis (defined as more than three bowel movements per 24 hours and a positive cytotoxin assay or culture). Factors that independently predisposed to infection included admission from a skilled-care facility, use of the antibiotic cefoxitin, and an operative procedure for bowel obstruction. Other factors associated with *C difficile* colitis included colectomy, treatment with any antibiotic, nasogastric tube suction, advanced age, and prior antibiotic treatment. Abdominal pain and fever also were more common in patients with *C difficile* colitis. Morbidity included prolonged hospitalization in all patients and urgent colectomy in one.

It was concluded that *C difficile* colitis frequently affects surgical patients, producing morbidity ranging from mild diarrhea to life-threatening illness. A variety of factors, many of which are associated with intestinal stasis, predispose to the development of *C difficile* colitis.

FROM: Kent KC, Rubin MS, Wroblewski L, Hanff PA, Silen W. The impact of *Clostridium difficile* on a surgical service: a prospective study of 374 patients. *Ann Surg* 1998;227:296-301.

Risk of *Helicobacter pylori* Transmission by Upper Gastrointestinal Endoscopy

Upper gastrointestinal endoscopy has been reported as a risk factor for the transmission of *Helicobacter pylori*. Investigators from San Paulo, Brazil, conducted a study to evaluate the possibility of transmission of *H pylori* infection by upper gastrointestinal endoscopy.

The study included 1,082 patients. Patients who had undergone upper gastrointestinal endoscopy or were treated with antibiotics 15 days before the index endoscopy were excluded. *H pylori* infection was diagnosed by ultra-rapid urease test. Variables analyzed were age, gender, type of dyspepsia (organic or functional), and the number of previous upper gastrointestinal endoscopies.

Patients ranged in age from 13 to 94 years (mean, 45.8; standard deviation [SD], 15.7), and the number of previous upper gastrointestinal endoscopies ranged from 0 to 20 (mean, 1.5; SD, 2.4). The overall prevalence of *H pylori* infection was 60%. There was no statistically significant difference in the mean number of upper gastrointestinal endoscopies in patients with and without *H pylori* infection.

The authors concluded that there was no association between history of upper gastrointestinal endoscopy and current *H pylori* infection in this study population.

FROM: Rohr MR, Castro R, Morais M, Brant CQ, Castelo Filho A, Ferrari AP Jr. Risk of *Helicobacter pylori* transmission by upper gastrointestinal endoscopy. *Am J Infect Control* 1998;26:12-15.

Additional news item in this issue: Community-Acquired Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus, 322.

INFECTION CONTROL FRACIIONER

Veteran Arizona Regional Medical Center is an expanding healthcare facility in one of the fastest growing areas of Arizona. We are seeking a skilled professional with 5+ years of experience who is certified in infection control by The Certifying Board for Infection Control. We offer ongoing education programs and generous tuition reimbursement. Please send your resume to:

Veteran Arizona Regional Medical Center Human Resources Dept APIC 598

7550a Grand Road

Buhead City, AZ 86412

FAX: (520) 704-6734

We conduct substance abuse testing

ROEMEDV.

1997 REVIEWERS

Of the many people responsible for the success of *Infection Control and Hospital Epidemiology*, among the most important are our cadre of reviewers. Their efforts enable us to publish articles of the highest quality, and the editors and authors are grateful for their efforts and advice. You have our deepest thanks.

Jacques Acar	Donald Goldmann	Sindy Paul
Garrett Adams	Barbara Goldrick	Clare Pegues
J Wesley Alexander	Peter Gross	Lance Peterson
Michelle Alfa	Donna Haiduven	Michael Pfaller
Robert Arbeit	Jo-Ann Harris	Sandy Pirwitz
Paul Arnow	David Henderson	Didier Pittet
Graham Ayliffe	Loreen Herwaldt	Vincenzo Puro
David Bangsberg	Peter Heseltine	Issam Raad
Joe Bates	Karen Hoffman	Annette Reboli
Murray Batt	Rene Holzheimer	Frank Rhame
Nathan Belkin	Christopher Ingram	Bruce Ribner
James Billingsley	Marguerite Jackson	Evelyn Rodriguez
Henry Blumberg	Janine Jagger	Manfred Rotter
Walter Bond	John Jernigan	William Rutala
Donald Bornstein	Allen Kaiser	Lisa Saiman
John Boyce	Sheldon Kaplan	William Schaffner
Patrick Brennan	Scott Kellerman	William Schekler
Christian Brun-Buisson	Douglas Kernodle	Lynne Schulster
Charles Bryan	JAJ Kluytmans	John Sellick
John Burke	Deloris Koziol	Kent Sepkowitz
Jay Butler	Stephen Kritchevsky	Daniel Sexton
Philip Carling	Kwan Kew Lai	Robert Sherertz
Louisa Chapman	James Lee	David Shlaes
James Cherry	Robert Leggiadro	Robert Shulman
Celia Christie	Ludwig Lettau	Robert Silva
Stuart Cohen	Calvin Linnemann	Bryan Simmons
Donald Craven	Victor Lorian	Andrew Simor
Kent Crossley	Janet Macher	Philip Smith
Lisa Danzig	A Macias-Hernandez	Denis Spelman
Franz Daschner	Farrin Manian	Susan Springthorpe
M Delgado-Rodriguez	Walter Marget	William Stead
E Patchen Dellinger	Joel Maslow	Larry Strausbaugh
Bradley Doebbeling	Glen Mayhall	Lauri Thrupp
Charles Edmiston	Allison McGeer	Jerome Tokars
Michael Edmond	Pat McGovern	Timothy Townsend
Theodore Eickhoff	John McGowan	Antoni Trilla
Grace Emori	Maryanne McGuckin	Joan Turner
Javier Ena	Jonathan Meakins	Ronald Turner
Bruce Farber	Beverly G Mellen	Andreas Voss
Barry Farr	Dick Menzies	Shu-Qun Wang
Martin Favero	Leonard Mermel	John Warren
Robert Fekety	Raf Mertens	Chatrchi Watanakunakorn
D J Flournoy	Kenneth Meyer	David Weber
Patricia Flynn	Marissa Montecalvo	John Weems
Sylvia Fonseca	Robert Muder	Robert Weinstein
Victoria Fraser	Maury Mulligan	Wolfgang Weuffen
Scott Fridkin	Joseph Mylotte	Sergio Wey
Peter Fuchs	Mary Nettleman	Andreas Widmer
Nelson Gantz	Ellen Neuhaus	Mary Willey
Richard Garibaldi	Kathy Neuzil	Edward S Wong
David L George	Lindsay Nicolle	Rebecca Wurtz
Julie Gerberding	Gary Noskin	Victor Yu
Dale Gerding	Juhani Ojarvi	Marcus Zervos
Aaron Glatt	Jan Evans Patterson	