

Pill May Treat Stubborn, Deadly C. Diff Bacteria

Associated Press

Transplanting fecal matter has been one of the best remedies at treating a tough bacterial infection known as *Clostridium difficile* (C. diff). Scientists are now saying they can give all the benefits of poop in a tiny pill.

This new pill method is a less yucky way to do "fecal transplants." And, Canadian researchers tried this method on 27 patients and cured them all after strong antibiotics failed to help.

It's a gross topic but a serious problem. Half a million Americans get C diff. infections each year, and about 14,000 die. The germ causes nausea, cramping and diarrhea so bad it is often disabling. A very potent and pricey antibiotic can kill C. diff but also destroys good bacteria that live in the gut, leaving it more susceptible to future infections.

Recently, studies have shown that fecal transplants -- giving infected people stool from a healthy donor -- can restore that balance. A New England Journal of Medicine study revealed that [poop transplants were better than antibiotics](#) [1] during a clinical trial. Another study presented at the Infectious Diseases Society of America meeting in October 2012 said that 43 out of 49 patients in Detroit who received fecal transplants [recovered quickly and had no complications three months later](#) [2].

However, poop transplants are given through expensive, invasive procedures like colonoscopies or throat tubes. Doctors also have tried giving the stool through enemas but the treatment doesn't always take hold.

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