Colstridium Difficile Colitis

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**Introduction**

Clostridium difficile infection (CDI) is usually caused by the administration of antibiotics that disrupt the normal flora of the gut allowing for colonization of C. difficile in the intestines (Aldrete, 2015). CDI can cause diarrhea and may progress into colitis, toxic megacolon, sepsis, or even death (Headley, 2012). The C. difficile spores are extremely hardy and can survive in the environment for extended periods. They are resistant to antibiotics, ultraviolet light, and other disinfectants, which makes them difficult to control. In addition, they can remain viable in the environment for months to years, which makes them a significant concern for healthcare settings. The United States has seen a dramatic increase in CDI cases in recent years, and it is estimated that 1 in 25 hospital patients will acquire CDI during their hospital stay (Moraco, 2015).

To prevent the spread of CDI, healthcare facilities have implemented strict infection control practices, including the use of personal protective equipment, proper hand hygiene, and isolation of patients with CDI. However, despite these efforts, the incidence of CDI continues to rise, highlighting the need for continued research and education on the prevention and management of this infection.

**Significance of Pathophysiology**

The pathophysiology of CDI is significant because it affects the normal flora of the gut and can lead to pseudomembranous colitis. The severity of the infection can range from mild symptoms to life-threatening complications, including severe dehydration, electrolyte imbalances, and organ failure.

**Symptoms**

- **Diarrhea:** often the first symptom, may be watery or blood-streaked
- **Abdominal pain:** cramping, tenderness
- **Fever:** may be present
- **Nausea:** may occur
- **Vomiting:** common
- **Chills:** may be present
- **Weakness:** may develop
- **Anemia:** may occur

**Implication for Nursing Care**

A patient with suspected or confirmed CDI should be immediately placed in a private room with enteric precautions to prevent the spread to others (Headley, 2012).

**References**


