

Presenter: Australian doctors say there's been a massive jump in a virulent new infection which is difficult to treat. Microbiologists say the number of people affected by C-difficile infections has **skyrocketed**. Medical reporter Sophie Scott has the story.

Scott: It's a deadly stomach **bug** that's killed thousands of people in Europe and the United-States. An antibiotic-resistant **strain** of clostridium difficile has only been in Australia for a few years. but the number of infected patients is growing rapidly.

Prof Thomas Riley: What I think is concerning is that the rates in Australia have doubled in the last 12 months.

Prof Thomas Borody: C-difficile is becoming more and more important as an infective agent that causes people to be very ill in hospitals, in intensive care with severe diarrhoea, dehydration and its complications, and the numbers are increasing.

Scott: And patients are reporting more severe cases of the illness.

Prof Riley: My concern is that this organism is going to, this very **nasty** strain, is going to get established in the Australian hospital system. If it gets established it will kill a lot of people very quickly.

Scott: C-difficile is resistant to some antibiotics, it's often found in elderly patients who've used antibiotics. The hypervirulent strain produces more toxins increasing the intensity of **gut symptoms**.

Prof Borody: The standard current medications don't work as well and the patients become ill much more rapidly.

Scott: The bug isn't killed by normal cleaners, so cleaning must be done with **bleach** and detergent.

Prof Riley: The area that concerns me most is that whereas this has always been a hospital problem, we're now starting to see cases coming in from the community.

Scott: Doctors are calling for better national surveillance to **monitor** the **spread** of the infection.

Sophie Scott ABCnews.

Lexical helpline.

Skyrocket = grimper en flèche, exploser

A bug = a germ, a microbe

A strain = une souche

Nasty = grave, dangereux

Gut symptoms = symptômes abdominaux

Bleach = eau de javel

Monitor = surveiller

The spread = la propagation