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A pill form mediated treatment for Clostridium difficile infection

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Clostridium difficile is a bacterium causing inflammation of colon. This infection is commonly associated with hospitals, health care facilities and recent antibiotic use.

As reported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, it leads to 29,000 deaths per year in the US. People infected with the bacteria can have recurrent diarrhea that lasts for several months or years.

Doctors typically treat C-diff with antibiotics but these spores are harder to kill. Once the antibiotics have destroyed both good and bad bacteria within the gut, additional toxins can be released by the remaining spores. A person suffering from C-diff infection has a 50 percent chance of getting a recurrence because of those toxins.

Researchers at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) School of Public Health and Kelsey Research Foundation have come out with a new study for treating patients with this infection.

Frozen and freeze-dried products for Fecal Microbiota Transplantation (FMT) is a procedure in which bacteria extracted from the fecal matter of a healthy donor is mixed in a solution and transferred to the patient via colonoscopy, endoscopy, sigmoidoscopy or enema. This technique helps in replenishing the good bacteria killed by antibiotics in the microbiome.

During the study, fresh FMT product produced a 100 percent cure among patients; frozen product showed 83 percent cure rate while freeze dried product produced 69 percent cure rate.

Herbert L. DuPont, M.D., senior author and director of the Center for Infectious Diseases at UTHealth School of Public Health said that a pill form of the product could make the whole procedure much easier. The frozen and freeze dried microbiota, which serve as good as the fresh material, are a lot more convenient to use.

At present, the safety and efficacy of a pill version of the product is being tested.

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