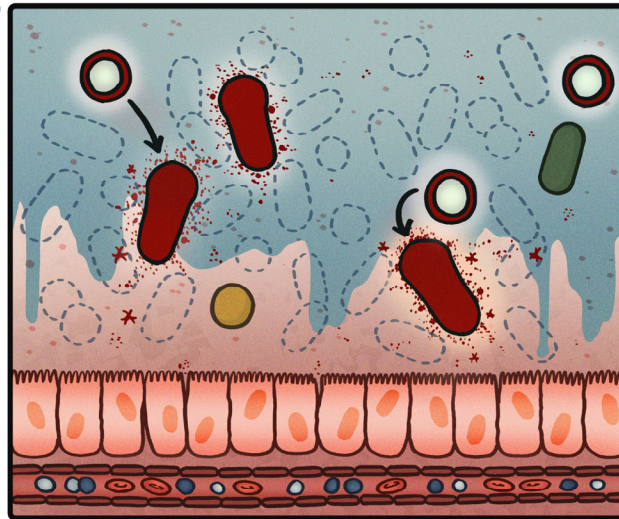


In a healthy person, the bacteria in the gut are abundant and diverse. This keeps dormant *C. difficile* cells (spores) in check.



But when this changes (for instance when antibiotics kill many bacteria), the spores wake up and grow out into *C. difficile* cells that produce toxins.



The toxins damage the lining of the gut and *C. difficile* produces new spores. Our immune system responds by sending cells to the site of infection.