

CAMPYLOBACTER

PERSONAL HEALTH FACT SHEET

What is Campylobacter?

It is an intestinal infection caused by bacteria named Campylobacter jejuni. It is one of the most common causes of diarrhea in the world.

How is it spread?

Campylobacter is spread by eating food that is contaminated with the bacteria (these bacteria are often found in undercooked meat and poultry) or by drinking contaminated water and unpasteurized milk. It can also be spread from contact with feces of infected dogs, cats and other animals. This organism is not readily transmitted from person to person, but can be transmitted by infected children in diapers.

How is it treated?

Campylobacter is usually diagnosed by checking a stool sample. Many times the infection is mild and will clear up by itself. Most of the time the only treatment will be to replace fluids lost due to diarrhea. If antibiotics are prescribed, make sure to finish all the medication. If you are a food-handler or work at or attend a day care, you may be asked not to attend work until symptoms have subsided.

How can we prevent Campylobacter?

- Practice good hygiene. After using the toilet and before preparing food, wash your hands.
- Thoroughly cook all poultry, meats and eggs.
- Wash all utensils and cutting boards that were used for meat/poultry in hot, soapy water.
- Don't drink water from unknown or unsafe sources.

SYMPTOMS OF CAMPYLOBACTER

- ✓ ***Diarrhea***
- ✓ ***Abdominal pain***
- ✓ ***Nausea***
- ✓ ***Vomiting***

Illness usually lasts 2-5 days, sometimes longer in adults. Some people may have the bacteria with no signs of illness at all (that is an "asymptomatic" infection).

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