

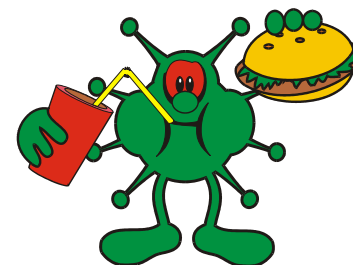


Campylobacter

(cam-pie-low-back-ter)

What is Campylobacter?

It is an illness caused by bacteria called Campylobacter. It infects the abdomen causing food poisoning.



Symptoms

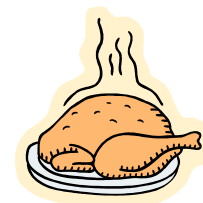
It usually takes between 2-5 days after eating contaminated food for symptoms to develop and they may include;

- diarrhoea (which may contain blood or mucus)
- fever
- stomach cramps
- nausea
- vomiting

The illness usually lasts from 1-10 days, but Campylobacter bacteria may be present in your faeces for several weeks or longer, even once all the symptoms have gone. This is known as being a "carrier".

How is it spread?

Campylobacter infection occurs when Campylobacter bacteria are taken in by mouth and it may happen in any of the following ways:-



Food

Campylobacter bacteria are naturally found in uncooked meat, particularly poultry. If it is not thoroughly cooked, the bacteria may survive and infect people who eat it. Unpasteurised milk may sometimes be contaminated with Campylobacter bacteria.

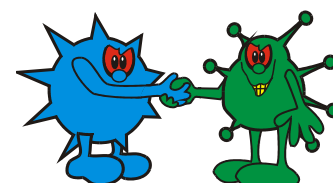


Cross-Contamination

Cross-contamination is the spread of bacteria from something that is contaminated with bacteria, to something that is not. Campylobacter can spread when uncooked foods contaminated with the bacteria cross-contaminate ready-to-eat foods, through either poor food handling, inadequate storage, or poor cleaning practices.

Person-to-Person Spread

People with Campylobacter have the bacteria in their faeces. If these people do not wash their hands after going to the toilet, they can contaminate surfaces and objects with the bacteria which will be touched by other people who could then become infected themselves. Hands can also become contaminated with bacteria when a person changes the nappy of an infected infant and not wash their hands thoroughly afterwards. Pets, farm animals, and contaminated water can also spread Campylobacter bacteria.



Prevention: Scrupulous personal hygiene when preparing food, ensuring no cross contamination between cooked and uncooked foods and thoroughly cooking food.

What to do if you have someone ill or infected with food poisoning in the house

Anyone suffering from or carrying *Campylobacter* SHOULD NOT prepare food for others to eat.



We would recommend that you DO NOT have friends in for meals or to stay with you whilst the infection is present.

Whilst diarrhoea persists, great care should be taken to clean the toilet including taps, door and flush handles after the patient has used it.

- Use a household disinfectant or bleach.
- Use disposable paper tissues for cleaning seat, flushing handle etc.
- Wash hands thorough afterwards.

Hands should be washed thoroughly with hand soap and hot running water for at least ten seconds, to minimise the risk of cross-contamination.

Cloth towels are not recommended for cleaning or drying as they get dirty quickly and can spread bacteria from one person to another, disposable tissues/towels are recommended.



Can I still work?

All people with symptoms should not work until symptom-free, people who work in food businesses, hospitals or nursery schools SHOULD NOT return to work until 48 hours after all symptoms have ceased. The manager of the food business should be notified of any food poisoning you or any family member, may have.

If people are formally excluded from work, they will not normally be required to return to work until 48 hours after **all** symptoms have ceased.

Please remember that you **may** still carry the organism for a number of weeks after the symptoms clear and scrupulous personal hygiene must be observed during this time.

NOTE: THERE MAY BE TYPES OF FOOD POISONING WHICH WILL REQUIRE YOU TO REMAIN OFF WORK UNTIL CLEARANCE IS GIVEN BY YOUR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER. YOU WILL BE ADVISED IF THIS IS THE CASE.

For further information, contact your local Environmental Protection Division, telephone number 01932 838383, or in case of continuing illness, consult your family doctor.