

CAMPYLOBACTERIOSIS (*Campylobacter*)

What is it?

Campylobacter is a bacterium that causes a diarrheal illness called campylobacteriosis. Campylobacteriosis is one of the most common bacterial foodborne diseases in the United States.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms of campylobacteriosis include diarrhea, stomach cramps, abdominal pain, and fever. Symptoms usually begin 2 to 5 days after being exposed to the bacteria.

How long does it last?

The symptoms usually last for about 1 week. Treatment for campylobacteriosis may be available from your health care provider. People with mild symptoms usually recover on their own without treatment.

How is it spread?

Campylobacter lives in the intestines of birds (specifically poultry) and other animals. It can be found in water, food, soil, or surfaces that have been contaminated with the feces of infected humans or animals.

People can become infected with *Campylobacter* by:

- Eating raw or undercooked poultry.
- Drinking raw, unpasteurized milk or contaminated water.
- Contact with farm animals or pets.
- Touching contaminated surfaces or objects and then touching their mouth or putting a contaminated object into their mouth.
- Not washing hands after using the bathroom or changing diapers and then eating foods.

What should I do if I have symptoms?

- Contact your health care provider.
- Wash your hands often.

How can I prevent campylobacteriosis?

- Cook all poultry products thoroughly.
- Prevent cross-contamination in the kitchen by washing hands, cutting boards, countertops, knives, utensils, and other surfaces after handling raw foods.
- Separate raw meats, poultry, and seafood from vegetables and cooked foods.
- Don't drink untreated water from lakes, rivers, streams, ponds, or shallow wells.
- Don't drink raw, unpasteurized milk.
- Wash your hands with warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds
 - ✓ After using the bathroom
 - ✓ After changing diapers
 - ✓ After touching animals
 - ✓ Before eating
- Wash your hands more often when someone in your household is sick.
- Wash and/or peel fruits and vegetables before eating them.
- Avoid preparing food for others while you have symptoms.

To report a suspected foodborne illness, call the Minnesota Department of Health Foodborne Illness Hotline at 1-877-FOOD-ILL (or 651-201-5655 from the Twin Cities).

