



## CAMPYLOBACTERIOSIS

### What is campylobacteriosis?

*Campylobacter* is a bacterium that infects the intestines (gut). When someone has an infection of *Campylobacter*, it is called campylobacteriosis. Only a special laboratory test can tell if someone is infected.

### Who gets campylobacteriosis?

Anyone can get campylobacteriosis. It is one of the most common illnesses that cause diarrhea (loose stools) in the United States, making about 1.5 million people sick every year. The infection is found more often in infants and young adults than in other age groups and occurs more often in males than females.

### How is campylobacteriosis spread?

The bacteria are found in human and animal feces. It is very common in cattle and chickens. People can get it by eating or drinking raw or contaminated water, milk, poultry, and meat or from infected pets and other animals. It is very rare to get *Campylobacter* from another person who has it.

### What are the symptoms of campylobacteriosis?

Symptoms are usually diarrhea (loose stools) which is sometimes bloody, stomachache, fever, nausea, and vomiting. Often the illness ends by itself, but it may require treatment with antibiotics.

### How soon do symptoms appear?

People usually get sick within two to five days of infection with these bacteria, but it can be as little as one day to as long as 10 days before illness occurs.

### Should an infected person be excluded from work or school?

Since the bacteria is passed in the feces (stools), only people with diarrhea (loose stools) should be isolated. Most infected people may return to work or school when their feces become solid. People with diarrhea should be excluded from childcare, food handling, and direct patient care until their symptoms have resolved.

### What is the treatment for campylobacteriosis?

Most people with campylobacteriosis will recover on their own. People with campylobacteriosis should drink extra fluids to prevent dehydration (loss of water in the body causing weakness or dizziness) as long as the diarrhea lasts. Antibiotics are occasionally used to treat severe cases or prescribed to people at high risk for severe disease, such as those with weakened immune systems (for example, people with cancer, HIV/AIDS, or a transplant).



# Frequently Asked Questions

## **What can a person or community do to prevent the spread of campylobacteriosis?**

It can be prevented by following these recommendations:

- Properly cook poultry and meats to at least 165 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Wash hands thoroughly after using the toilet, before handling any food, and after handling raw foods.
- Only drink pasteurized milk.
- Never drink water from creeks, lakes, or springs.

## **Resources**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,  
<https://www.cdc.gov/campylobacter/index.html>