

WHAT IS CAMPYLOBACTER ?



Campylobacter is a very common form of gastro-enteritis. It is more common than Salmonella and is an important cause of travellers' disease.

How did I get it ?

From any of the following sources:

- From handling raw meat especially poultry
- From drinking untreated water or milk
- From eating undercooked meat or poultry
- From direct contact with animals
- From close contact with another infected person
- From milk bottles pecked open by birds

When did I get it ?

The illness usually occurs within 2 - 10 days of infection but it can be up to 14 days before the symptoms appear.

What are the signs and symptoms ?

- Fever, a feeling of being generally unwell, abdominal pains.
- After 2-3 days diarrhoea starts (some people might see blood and mucus). This lasts 2-3 days longer.
- Colicky abdominal pains may last for a further 10-14 days
- Vomiting is rare in adults but may happen in children.

How do I stop it spreading ?

- Wash hands thoroughly after going to the toilet and before preparing meals or eating
- Young children with the infection should have their hands washed for them or be supervised
- Disinfect all areas in the toilet daily (including door handles)
- Infected persons should stay away from work until vomiting and diarrhoea have ceased
- If the infected person is a food handler, works as a health carer / nurse or is a child attending school or a nursery etc. further advice should be obtained
- Read the accompanying leaflet for further guidance

Where can I get more advice ?

- Your own General Medical Practitioner or a health specialist will be able to advise upon individual patient health care.
- You should inform your place of work or in the case of children, the head teacher of the school to find out if exclusion is necessary and when you can return.
- The investigating officer will also provide you with a more general leaflet on infection control and may be contacted on the number below for further advice if it is required.

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