

Campylobacteriosis

Frequently Asked Questions



What is campylobacteriosis?

Campylobacteriosis is a bacterial illness that causes diarrhea.

What are the symptoms?

The symptoms of campylobacteriosis can include:

- Diarrhea (possibly with blood)
- Stomach cramps/pain
- Fever
- Nausea
- Vomiting

How soon after being infected will symptoms appear?

People with campylobacteriosis develop symptoms 2-5 days after infection and usually recover in about a week. Long-term complications, from arthritis to Guillain-Barré syndrome, are rare. Some infected persons may not develop symptoms at all.

How does it spread?

Most *campylobacter* infections occur from people eating undercooked or raw poultry or meat, or other food that has been cross-contaminated by these meats. Other sources of campylobacter are raw or unpasteurized milk or contaminated water. It is not often spread from person to person.

How is it diagnosed and treated?

The test for *campylobacter* is a stool culture. Campylobacteriosis can be treated with antibiotics to shorten the illness if given early in the infection, however most people recover without any treatment. Diarrhea can cause fluid loss and dehydration, so it is important to drink fluids.

What should I do if I think I have it?

If you think you have campylobacteriosis, contact your doctor and discuss your symptoms.

How is it prevented?

- Always cook meat and poultry to the correct temperature, by checking with a meat thermometer. The color of the meat does not ensure it is done cooking.
- When preparing raw poultry or meat, disinfect cutting boards and utensils that come in contact with raw food, along with any surfaces that raw food touches.
- Do not eat any unpasteurized dairy products or juices.
- Be sure to wash hands frequently with soap and water especially before and after food preparation, after changing diapers or going to the bathroom, and after touching or petting animals (especially those at farms, fairs, and petting zoos).

For more information contact your doctor, refer to <http://www.phila.gov/Health/> or contact the Philadelphia Department of Public Health, Division of Disease Control at 215-685-6740.

