

Environmental Services Department

Campylobacter



What is Campylobacter?

Campylobacter is a bacteria which is carried in the gut of animals, especially poultry. It can cause diarrhoea, stomach pain and vomiting.

How did I get it?

Commonly by eating undercooked meat, especially poultry. It can also be caught through direct contact with infected animals, or by drinking contaminated milk. Person to person spread is rare.

What is the incubation period?

This is the delay between the bacteria entering your body and you becoming unwell. It is usually 2 to 5 days but can be from 1 to 10 days. The illness usually lasts from a few days to several weeks.

How do I treat it?

Campylobacter normally clears up on its own without treatment. However, if your symptoms persist and you are concerned, see your doctor for advice.

How can I avoid catching it or passing it on?

Cook foods thoroughly, especially meats like poultry.

Always wash and dry your hands thoroughly –

- **after** using the toilet, handling soiled bedding/clothes, changing nappies and dealing with animals
- **before** preparing and eating food

Should I stay away from work or school?

You should stay away from work or school until you have had no symptoms for at least 24 hours. You do not need to stay away if you have been in contact with someone who has campylobacter if you have no symptoms yourself.

If you are a food handler or work with vulnerable groups, e.g. nurses, care assistants, nursery staff etc, you should stay away from work until you have not had any symptoms for at least 2 days. You should also notify your employer and comply with any company rules regarding clearance to return to work.

If you would like any further information, please contact:

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