

What is Campylobacter?

Campylobacter bacteria cause food poisoning. It is the most common cause of food poisoning in the UK.

What are the symptoms of Campylobacter and how long do they last?

Symptoms include diarrhoea, vomiting, stomach pains and cramps, fever and generally feeling unwell. They usually develop within two - five days, but can take as long as 10 days. Most cases start to clear up after two-three days of diarrhoea, with 80% of cases settling within one week of symptoms.

How do you get infected with Campylobacter?

Anyone can get Campylobacter, but young children under 5 years of age, those over 60 years of age and people who work with farm animals, in the meat industry and travellers to developing countries are at greatest risk.

You usually get infected by eating contaminated food. Campylobacter is found in most raw poultry and is common in raw meat. Mushrooms and shellfish can also be contaminated but this is unusual. Avoid storing raw and cooked food together and don't use the same work surfaces, or utensils when preparing raw and cooked foods.

How do you treat Campylobacter?

Most people who have Campylobacter recover without treatment within two-five days, although it can sometimes take up to 10 days to get better. It is important to drink plenty of fluids as diarrhoea or vomiting can lead to dehydration.

- If you feel sick, try taking small sips frequently.
- Avoid tea and coffee, carbonated drinks and alcohol.
- Always dilute sugary drinks even if you would not normally dilute them.
- A simple pain killer like paracetamol can help to combat any pain.

If the infection is severe you may be given antibiotics. If you are given antibiotics it is essential that you complete the course as prescribed.

Do you need to stay off work or school?

Yes. While you are ill and have symptoms you are infectious. You can return to work or school once you have been free from diarrhoea for 48 hours.

You should tell your employer you have had a Campylobacter infection if you work with vulnerable groups such as the elderly, the young, those in poor health or if you handle food.

Do you need to stay in hospital until Campylobacter infection has cleared?

You would not usually have to stay in hospital until your Campylobacter infection has cleared, if you are able to care for yourself and maintain your fluid intake.

How will this affect your visitors?

- Visitors are allowed as normal.
- Visitors will be requested to decontaminate their hands with soap and water on entering and leaving the ward. If helping with personal care they must wear gloves and aprons; once completed the gloves and aprons must be disposed of in the orange clinical waste bin. Hands must be decontaminated with soap and water following any period of “hands on” care.
- Please do not allow visitors to sit or lie on your bed.
- If someone in the family has Campylobacter infection, wash all dirty clothes, bedding and towels in the washing machine on the hottest cycle possible. Clean toilet seats, toilet bowls, flush handles, taps, hand basins and any other areas that might have been soiled with detergent and hot water, rinsing with household disinfectant.
- Supervise children closely to ensure that they wash their hands thoroughly.

How can you avoid getting infected with Campylobacter in the future?

Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm water:

- Before preparing and eating food
- After handling raw food
- After using the toilet or changing a baby’s nappy
- After contact with pets and other animals
- After working in the garden.

For further information:

Please speak with an Infection Prevention & Control Nurse.

Tel: 01493 453136

Feedback

We want your visit to be as comfortable as possible. Please talk to the person in charge if you have any concerns. If the ward/ department staff are unable to resolve your concern, please ask for our Patient Advice and Liaison (PALS) information. Please be assured that raising a concern will not impact on your care. **Before you leave the hospital you will be asked to complete a Friends and Family Test feedback card.** Providing your feedback is vital in helping to transform NHS services and to support patient choice.

Trust Values

- Courtesy and respect
- A welcoming and positive attitude
- Polite, friendly and interested in people
- Value and respect people as individuals
So people feel **welcome**
- Attentively kind and helpful
- Look out for dignity, privacy & humanity
- Attentive, responsive & take time to help
- Visible presence of staff to provide care
So people feel **cared for**

- Responsive communication
- Listen to people & answer their questions
- Keep people clearly informed
- Involve people
So people feel **in control**
- Effective and professional
- Safe, knowledgeable and reassuring
- Effective care / services from joined up teams
- Organised and timely, looking to improve
So people feel **safe**



The hospital can arrange for an interpreter or person to sign to assist you in communicating effectively with staff during your stay. Please let us know.

For a large print version of this leaflet, contact PALS 01493 453240