

# Campylobacteriosis

(*Campylobacter Enteritis*)

## Information Sheet

### What is a Campylobacteriosis?

Campylobacteriosis is a bacterial infection that affects the intestinal tract and, in rare cases, the bloodstream. It is a commonly reported cause of bacterial diarrhea. Most cases are seen in the summer months, and occur as single cases or outbreaks.

### What are the symptoms of Campylobacteriosis?

Campylobacteriosis may cause mild or severe diarrhea, often with fever and traces of blood in the stool.

The symptoms generally appear 2 to 5 days after the exposure, with a range of 1 to 10 days after exposure.

### How is it spread?

- Many animals including pigs, cattle, dogs and birds (particularly poultry) carry the bacteria in their intestines. These sources in turn may contaminate meat products (particularly poultry), water supplies, milk and other items in the food chain.
- Generally, after being infected people will continue to pass the bacteria in their faeces for a few days up to a week or more. Certain antibiotics may shorten the carrier phase.
- Most infected people may return to work or school when their stools become formed provided that they carefully wash their hands after toilet visits.

### How is Campylobacteriosis prevented?

- Always treat raw poultry, beef and pork as if they are contaminated and handle accordingly:
  - Promptly refrigerate foods at less than 40°F; minimize holding time at room temperature.
  - Wash and disinfect cutting boards and counters used for food preparation immediately after use to prevent cross-contamination with other foods
  - Avoid eating raw or undercooked meats
  - Ensure that the correct internal cooking temperature is reached, particularly when using a microwave
- Avoid eating raw eggs or undercooking foods containing raw eggs
- Avoid consuming raw milk (unpasteurized)
- Carefully wash hands with soap before and after food preparation
- Make sure children wash their hands with soap after playing with pets
- Recognize, control and prevent *Campylobacter* infection in domestic animals and pets
- Always wash hands with soap after toilet visits

### What is the treatment?

Most people infected with *Campylobacter* will recover without treatment. Infected people should drink fluids to prevent dehydration. Antibiotics are occasionally used to treat severe cases or to shorten the carrier phase, which may be important for food workers, children in daycare and health care workers. Since relapses occasionally occur, some physicians might treat mild cases with antibiotics to prevent a recurrence of symptoms.