



Campylobacter enteritis

What is *Campylobacter enteritis*?

Campylobacter enteritis is a disease caused by bacteria *Campylobacter jejuni* and *Campylobacter coli*. These are the two species that most often infect humans. When ingested, it can cause illness in humans and animals.

How is it spread?

You may become ill by eating undercooked chicken, beef or pork. Most raw meats and their juices are contaminated with *Campylobacter* bacteria, which are usually destroyed during cooking.

Ingestion of 'ready-to-eat' foods, such as fruit or salad ingredients that have been contaminated with the juices of raw meats during preparation may expose you to the bacteria.

Raw eggs and egg products, and raw or unpasteurized milk are another source of *Campylobacter* bacteria.

You may also be exposed to the bacteria if you are in contact with the fecal matter (poop) of an infected person (for example, during diaper changes) and then do not wash your hands well before touching your mouth, preparing or eating food, or if you ingest water that has been contaminated with fecal matter (poop).

Puppies, kittens, and farm animals are other important sources of *Campylobacter* bacteria. When you handle infected animals and ingest their waste products you may be exposed to the bacteria.

What symptoms should I watch for?

Most people experience diarrhea, abdominal pain, tiredness, fever, nausea, and vomiting. You may have blood or mucous in liquid stools. These symptoms usually begin 2 to 5 days after you are exposed to the bacteria. Most people are mildly sick for about one week. Some people who are infected with the *Campylobacter* bacteria don't have any symptoms at all. Some people can get serious complications, but this is rare. Some people will experience relapse of symptoms.

What is the treatment for *Campylobacter enteritis*?

Consulting your health care provider is recommended as he/she may suggest antibiotics or treatment focused on your symptoms, such as fluid replacement to prevent dehydration.

How do I protect myself and others?

- Cook all meat, especially poultry, to recommended temperatures.

Product	Celsius	Fahrenheit
Whole Chicken/Turkey	82	180
Poultry Breasts	74	165
Pork	71	160
Ground Meat	71-74	160-165

- Clean and sanitize counter tops and utensils after contact with raw meats and poultry, especially before using these areas or utensils to prepare ready-to-eat foods or foods that will not be cooked any further.
- Avoid using raw eggs in eggnogs, salad dressings, ice cream and desserts. Never use cracked or dirty eggs. Cook all egg products thoroughly; eggs cooked "over easy" or "sunny side up" are incompletely cooked.
- Drink only pasteurized milk and water from an approved or chemically treated source. If you are unsure of the safety of your water supply, bring the water to a rapid rolling boil for at least 1 minute, or use an approved disinfectant.
- It is important to wash your hands before and after using the toilet, before preparing or eating meals, after changing diapers and after being in close contact with animals. It only takes a small amount of the bacteria to make you ill.

Is there anything special I need to know?

If you are infected with the *Campylobacter* bacteria and you provide services to others, particularly seniors or children, food handlers or healthcare, you should not go to work until you have not had any symptoms for at least 24 hours, and 48 hours after your last dose of anti-diarrheal medication. Even after you are feeling better you could still be shedding the bacteria in your stool.

For information call Infectious Diseases: ext. 8809.

