

Campylobacter *Fact Sheet*



What is campylobacter?

Campylobacter is a bacterial illness which commonly causes diarrhea.

Symptoms

Symptoms usually start 2-5 days after ingestion of bacteria. It takes very few bacteria to cause illness. These include:

- **Diarrhea, often bloody**
- **Abdominal cramping**
- **Nausea & vomiting**
- **Fever**
- **You must inform your employer of illness if you handle food or care for people in hospitals, custodial institutions, or daycare centers.**

In some cases, Campylobacter may cause complications such as irritable bowel syndrome, arthritis, or Guillain-Barre Syndrome.

Prevention

Wash hands regularly with soap and water. **Avoid cross contamination when cooking.** Use separate cutting boards for meat and produce. Thoroughly wash and dry all produce prior to cooking or consuming. **Drink treated water and pasteurized milk.** Cook all poultry products thoroughly to an internal temperature of 165 degrees fahrenheit. **Avoid swimming if you are sick with diarrhea.**

How is it spread?

Most cases are associated with handling or consuming raw or undercooked poultry.

Campylobacter is also spread through consuming contaminated food, untreated water, unpasteurized dairy products, or through infected animals. Although not typically spread person-to-person, this is possible, especially when strict hand hygiene is not followed.

Treatment

Most individuals recover within ten days without any specific treatment. Ill persons should drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration. In more severe cases, antibiotics may be used.

