



Central Michigan District Health Department

Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities



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Campylobacter

What is Campylobacter?

Campylobacter is an infection caused by a bacterial germ that gets into the digestive system causing inflammation of the stomach and intestines.

How is it spread?

The bacteria can be carried in the intestines, liver or other organs of animals and transferred when the animal is slaughtered. It is also found in the stool of domestic and wild birds and animals such as chickens, turkeys, ducks, farm animals, and pets such as cats and dogs. Transmission can occur by eating contaminated food, undercooked meat, unpasteurized milk, untreated water, or by direct contact with the stool of infected farm animals, pets, or persons.

What are the symptoms?

- Stomachache
- Fever
- Diarrhea (stools may contain blood)
- Nausea
- Vomiting

Most people recover in less than 1 week, but some may have a relapse or prolonged illness.

What is the treatment for Campylobacter?

The only way to tell if your illness is caused by this germ is to see your doctor. A sample of your bowel movement (stool) will be checked for the bacteria. Your doctor may give you an antibiotic. *Make sure you take the medication as prescribed, even if you start to feel better. If you stop the medicine, you may still have the bacteria inside you.*

How can I guard against the spread of this disease?

- Wash your hands after using the bathroom.
- Wash your hands before and after preparing food.
- Wash your hands after handling animals.
- Wash cutting boards and utensils after contact with raw poultry or meats.
- Thoroughly cook all meats and poultry (chicken, turkey).
- Wash your hands before eating.
- Wash your hands after changing diapers.

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- Dispose of dirty diapers so that children and animals cannot get into them.
- Do not drink unpasteurized products.
- Wash, using friction, fruits and vegetables prior to consuming.
- Do not drink water from a lake or stream.