



FACT SHEET

Campylobacteriosis

What is it?

Campylobacteriosis is an infection of the intestines caused by a bacteria called *Campylobacter*. The bacteria is commonly found in the feces of infected people and animals, and food products contaminated with the bacteria during processing or preparation.

Symptoms

Symptoms of the illness develop within 1 to 10 days after swallowing the bacteria, but usually between 3 to 5 days. Infected persons may have very mild symptoms or severe gastrointestinal illness.

Symptoms usually resolve within 10 days, and may include:

- Mild to severe diarrhea (may be bloody)
- Stomach cramps
- Fever (can be very high)
- Vomiting
- Convulsions (in sever cases)

How is it spread?

Campylobacter bacteria leave an infected person's or animal's body in the stool. If these bacteria get into a persons mouth, the person gets sick.

People can get Campylobacteriosis when they:

- Eat contaminated food, such as chicken that has been poorly cooked, cheese made from unpasteurized milk, or fruits and vegetables that have not been properly washed.
- Drink contaminated water or unpasteurized milk
- Handle sick pets or farm animals (especially puppies and kittens with diarrhea).

Diagnosis and Treatment

- The disease is diagnosed from culturing a stool sample.
- Drink plenty of juices (clean water, juices and soup) to prevent dehydration (fluid loss).
- Most people get better without treatment. If the infection is severe or prolonged, an antibiotic may be prescribed.

Prevention

- Wash hands thoroughly after going to the bathroom, changing diapers, before preparing or eating food and after cleaning up after sick pets.
- Wash hands after handling animals or pets (and their waste) or visiting a farm.
- Drink only pasteurized milk and eat only pasteurized milk cheeses.
- Cook all meats thoroughly, particularly chicken and pork.
- Avoid cross-contamination. Make sure that other foods, such as fruit or vegetables, do not come into contact with cutting boards or knives that have been used with raw meat or poultry.
- Disinfect food-preparation surfaces and utensils after each use, as follows:
 - Use 1 tsp liquid household bleach per gallon of water
 - Do not rinse
 - Let air dry
 - Prepare the bleach solution fresh daily

Report all cases to El Paso Department of Public Health by calling 915-212-6520

