

Protect foil topped milk bottles from being pecked by birds. Throw away milk in bottles which have had their foil tops pecked by birds. Alternatively, boil the milk thoroughly before use.

Avoid swallowing water when doing water sports and avoid drinking unchlorinated water.

Be particularly careful when travelling abroad to countries where there is poor sanitation and drinking water may not be pure.

Help Yourself

And others

Always

Remember to

Wash your

hands

For further information contact:

Your family doctor, health visitor

Or

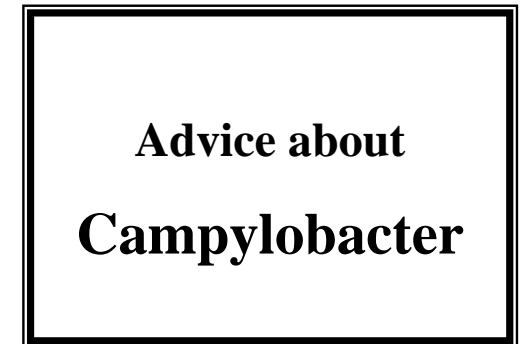
Food and Health Service

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Leeds Health Protection Team



Keep Leeds Healthy

Produced by Leeds Health Protection Team

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CAMPYLOBACTER

WHAT IS IT?

Campylobacter is a germ which may cause:

- *Flu-like illness*
- *Headaches*
- *Feeling sick*
- *Vomiting*
- *Stomach pain*
- *Diarrhoea*

The symptoms, particularly the stomach pains, can be severe. They usually last for 2 to 5 days, although in some cases may last for longer.

HOW DO YOU GET IT?

By swallowing the *Campylobacter* germ when eating or drinking contaminated food, milk or water.

Unpasteurised milk and raw meat and poultry may be contaminated. However, thorough cooking of meat and poultry, and the pasteurisation of milk will destroy the germ. The germ may also be passed on from birds which have pecked at the foil tops of milk bottles on the doorstep.

Fingers may carry the germ to the mouth after contact with contaminated soil.

Campylobacter can also be found in untreated water such as in rivers and lakes. If accidentally swallowed, this too may cause illness. Drinking unchlorinated water is also a risk.

Farm animals and pets may harbour the germ. Infection is possible when there is an accidental transfer of animal faeces to your mouth.

CAN YOU GET IT FROM SOMEONE ELSE?

It is possible to catch *Campylobacter* from someone else who has the infection although this is rare. Spread may occur when parents of an infected child come into contact with dirty nappies.

CAN YOU GIVE IT TO SOMEONE ELSE?

Yes. If you have the infection, washing your hands regularly and thoroughly, especially after going to the toilet and before preparing food, will prevent anyone else catching it.



IS THERE ANY TREATMENT?

Most people get better without special treatment. In severe cases an antibiotic may help. Your family doctor can advise if this is needed. As with all infections which cause diarrhoea and vomiting, young children and the elderly most easily become dehydrated. If you have any worries about symptoms you should contact your family doctor.

WHAT ABOUT GOING TO WORK OR SCHOOL?

Anyone with *Campylobacter* should stay off work or school until they feel better and are 48 hours free of symptoms. Children under 5 years will be advised to stay off school/nursery or childcare until 48 hours free of symptoms.

HOW CAN CAMPYLOBACTER BE PREVENTED?

Wash and dry hands carefully after handling raw meat and poultry.

Keep raw meat and poultry away from other foods, particularly in the fridge. Wash utensils and chopping boards with hot water and detergent.

Make sure meat and poultry are properly cooked, particularly at barbecues.

Wash hands regularly and thoroughly, particularly after using the toilet, before preparing or eating food and after changing a baby's nappy.