

## Patient information

### **Campylobacter**

Infection Prevention and Control Team

#### **What is Campylobacter?**

Campylobacter bacteria cause food poisoning.

#### **Symptoms can include:**

- Diarrhoea
- Vomiting
- Stomach pains and cramps
- High temperature (fever)
- Feeling generally unwell

Symptoms usually start within two to five days after exposure but can take as long as ten days to develop. Most cases start to settle after two to three days of diarrhoea. The majority will settle within a week.

#### **Who can get Campylobacter?**

Anyone can get Campylobacter, but certain groups are at greater risk:

- Children under five years of age.
- Adults over 60 years of age.
- People who work with farm animals.
- People who work in the meat industry.
- Travellers to developing countries.

#### **How can you get Campylobacter?**

You usually get campylobacter by eating contaminated food. Campylobacter is found in most raw poultry and is common in raw meat.

You can also get campylobacter from infected pets and other animals. It is impossible to tell from the appearance of food whether it is contaminated. It will look, smell and taste normal so correct handling is very important.

### **What will happen if I have Campylobacter?**

You will remain isolated in a side room until your symptoms stop or until you are assessed as safe to leave isolation.

Antibiotic treatment is generally not required unless you have very severe infection.

You should drink plenty of liquids to replace the fluids lost. Also continue to eat as normally as possible.

Avoid tea, coffee, carbonated drinks and alcohol.

### **Can I have visitors?**

Yes, you can. However, your visitors should wash their hands with soap and water before and after visiting you.

Although children are welcome, babies and young children are more at risk of picking up and passing on infection. So please do not let them visit other patients or wander unsupervised around the ward.

### **How can I avoid getting infected with Campylobacter?**

Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water:

- Before and after preparing and eating food
- After handling raw food
- After going to the toilet or changing a baby's nappy
- After contact with pets or other animals
- After working in the garden

#### **In addition:**

- Keep cooked food away from raw food
- Cook food thoroughly, especially meat
- Keep kitchen surfaces clean

### **Laundry**

Patients' laundry can be taken home and washed as normal.

If your own clothing does become soiled it will be placed in a plastic bag in the locker to be taken by relatives and laundered.

Wash these clothes separately on the hottest wash suitable for the garment. Remember to wash your hands after handling soiled linen.

### **What should I do when I am discharged home?**

#### **If you still have symptoms, such as diarrhoea and/or vomiting:**

Stay off work, school, college, etc, until at least 48 hours after the last episode of diarrhoea or vomiting.

Ensure that you drink enough fluids to avoid dehydration.

Wash your hands with soap and water often, particularly after using the toilet and when preparing food.

Clean household surfaces frequently using disinfectant.

Contact your GP if your symptoms do not go away, or they come back.

### **Feedback**

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future.

Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is appreciated.

### **Further Information**

#### **Infection Prevention and Control Team**

##### **Aintree Hospital**

**Tel: 0151 529 4930**

**Text phone number: 18001 0151 529 4930**

##### **Royal or Broadgreen Hospitals**

**Tel: 0151 706 4416**

**Text phone number: 18001 0151 706 4416**

**Food poisoning - NHS ([www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk))**

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All Trust approved information is available on request in alternative formats, including other languages, easy read, large print, audio, Braille, moon and electronically.

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