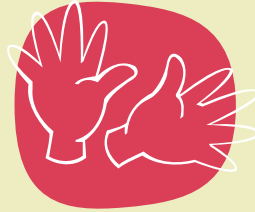


Food

- Meat should be thawed in the fridge and not at room temperature.
- Keep raw meat covered and separate from other foods and store at the bottom of the fridge.
- If possible use separate chopping boards when preparing raw foods (especially meat and poultry) and cooked foods.
- Scrub your chopping boards clean in hot soapy water.
- Cook poultry thoroughly until the juices are clear.
- When barbecuing be sure to cook all meat thoroughly and avoid contaminating prepared foods with raw meat or juices.
- Make sure any milk you drink is pasteurised.
- Avoid eating shellfish which has been gathered from contaminated waters.

Water in rural areas

- Drinking water taken from the roof, rivers or lakes should be boiled for one minute or an approved filter (Standard AS/NZS4348:1995) should be used.
- When using roof water, spouting should be cleaned regularly and roofs kept clear of bird and animal droppings.
- Avoid placing TV aerials on the roof for birds to perch on, and avoid placing trees close to the house, to prevent animals from getting on to the roof.



Washing hands in hot soapy water and drying them with a clean towel will help prevent the spread of campylobacter infection.



campylobacter

Prevent this food and waterborne disease.



Campylobacter (pronounced cam-pile-oh-bacter) infection is caused by bacteria which are found in the gut of birds especially poultry, and animals such as cattle, sheep, cats and dogs.

It is passed on in the faeces (poo, tūtae) of infected birds, animals and humans.

How does a person become infected?

People become infected when they swallow the bacteria. This may be from contaminated water and food, or from contact with infected animals or humans.

The signs and symptoms of the illness

The illness:

- usually begins with diarrhoea which may be blood stained, and stomach pain and cramps which may be severe
- may begin with influenza-like symptoms ie, headache, muscle pains, fever, fatigue
- may develop one to ten days (usually three to five days) after contact with the bacteria
- may rarely have more severe symptoms such as arthritis or acute paralysis
- may last for about 10 days. However, a person can be infectious from the start of the illness for 2-7 weeks and relapses can occur.

Treatment of campylobacter infection

- For advice, testing and treatment you will need to visit your doctor.
- Take a faecal specimen with you, as a laboratory test will be needed.
- Your doctor may give you a course of antibiotics if your case is severe, if you are older or if you have other health problems. However, campylobacter infection will usually get better without antibiotics if you follow your doctor's instructions.
- Drink plenty of fluids while the diarrhoea lasts to prevent dehydration. Go back to your doctor if your child is not drinking.
- If you have campylobacter infection the doctor is required to report this to the Medical Officer of Health of the Public Health Service (PHS). The PHS may contact you to find out how you picked up the bacteria. This helps to prevent more outbreaks of the illness.

Taking time off work or school

Usually people can go back to work and children can return to early childhood centres and school if they are symptom free.

However, as campylobacter infection is a notifiable disease you will need to check with your doctor or health protection officer first.

If you are employed in a hospital, rest home, school, early childhood centre, or working with food you may be required to stay away from work until you are tested free from campylobacter.

How to avoid getting campylobacter and passing it on to others

Wash your hands thoroughly by using plenty of soap, cleaning under fingernails, rinsing hands well and drying on a clean towel:

- before and after preparing food
- after going to the toilet or changing a baby's nappy
- after caring for people with campylobacter
- after playing or working with animals.