

Campylobacter

What is Campylobacter?

Campylobacter is a germ which commonly causes food poisoning. The symptoms are usually diarrhoea (which may contain blood), stomach cramps, muscle cramps, vomiting and fever. These normally get better after several days without any treatment. Sometimes the symptoms may be more severe, in the old & very young. These people may need to come into hospital, particularly if they become dehydrated.

How did I get Campylobacter?

Campylobacter infections usually result from:

- Handling contaminated foods, pets or farm animals
- Eating contaminated food which has not been cooked properly
- Drinking untreated water or milk

How will the Campylobacter be treated?

Most people who have Campylobacter get better without any treatment. The main treatment is to make sure that you do not become dehydrated. You must drink plenty of fluids. If this is not possible then you may need a drip. Painkillers can also be given to help with joint pains.

Occasionally, if the symptoms are severe or if the person affected has a problem with their immune system, then antibiotics may be considered.

How is Campylobacter diagnosed?

A clinician may request a stool (faeces or 'pooh') sample to test for the bacteria in patients who have prolonged or severe symptoms or who have a problem with their immune system. Other reasons to request a stool sample may include a person's job (e.g. food handling) or having had a recent course of antibiotics or stay in hospital.

How is the spread of Campylobacter prevented?

It is rare for Campylobacter to be spread from one person to another.

At home, the spread of Campylobacter can be prevented by the correct storage and preparation of food, good hand washing before preparing food & after handling raw meat. Hands should also be washed after handling animals, after going to the toilet or changing a baby's nappy and before eating.

How will I know when the Campylobacter has gone?

When you have had a normal bowel motion for two days the infection will have gone. There is no need to test more samples.

Will anyone else contact me about the Campylobacter Infection?

Campylobacter must be reported to the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), who are responsible for the health of the general public. Someone from the local Health Protection Team may contact you, to ask you some questions. Please do not be concerned, this is routine.

Acknowledgements:

<https://royalwolverhampton.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Campylobacter.pdf> Accessed 08.04.2026

<https://cks.nice.org.uk/topics/gastroenteritis/management/adult-gastroenteritis/> Accessed 08.04.2026

<https://patient.info/digestive-health/diarrhoea/campylobacter> Accessed 08.04.2026

<https://leaflets.ekhuft.nhs.uk/campylobacter-infection/html/> accessed 09.04.2026

If you need further advice, please contact the Emergency Department – details below
Patient Experience

We know that being admitted to hospital can be a difficult and unsettling time for you and your loved ones. If you have any questions or concerns, please do speak with a member of staff on the ward or in the relevant department who will do their best to answer your questions and reassure you.

Feedback

Feedback is really important and useful to us – it can tell us where we are working well and where improvements can be made. There are lots of ways you can share your experience with us including completing our Friends and Family Test – cards are available and can be posted on all wards, departments and clinics at our hospitals. We value your comments and feedback and thank you for taking the time to share this with us.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

If you have any concerns or questions about your care, we advise you to talk with the nurse in charge or the department manager in the first instance as they are best placed to answer any questions or resolve concerns quickly. If the relevant member of staff is unable to help resolve your concern, you can contact the PALS Team. We offer informal help, advice or support about any aspect of hospital services & experiences.

Our PALS team will liaise with the various departments in our hospitals on your behalf, if you feel unable to do so, to resolve your problems and where appropriate refer to outside help.

If you are still unhappy you can contact the Complaints Department, who can investigate your concerns. You can make a complaint orally, electronically or in writing and we can advise and guide you through the complaints procedure.

How to contact PALS:

Telephone Patient Services: 0300 123 1732 or via email at: wah-tr.PALS@nhs.net

Opening times:

The PALS telephone lines are open Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 4.00pm. Please be aware that you may need to leave a voicemail message, but we aim to return your call within one working day.

If you are unable to understand this leaflet, please communicate with a member of staff.

For additional medical advice, if your symptoms or condition worsens:

Contact your GP

NHS 111:

Get help with your symptoms, NHS111:
Information to help you manage your health:

Telephone 111

<https://111.nhs.uk/>
www.nhs.uk

In an emergency telephone 999

Emergency Department (A&E)
Alexandra Hospital
Woodrow Drive
Redditch B98 7UB

Tel: 01527 512030

Minor Injury Unit
Kidderminster Hospital
Bewdley Road
Kidderminster DY11 6RJ

Tel: 01562 513039

Emergency Department (A&E)
Worcestershire Royal Hospital
Charles Hastings Way
Worcester WR5 1DD

Tel: 01905 760743