

**Mission:**

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



**Rick Scott**  
Governor

**John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS**  
State Surgeon General & Secretary

**Vision:** To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

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## **CAMPYLOBACTERIOSIS**

### **Accompanying: Hand Washing Fact Sheet**

#### **What is Campylobacteriosis?**

Campylobacteriosis is an infection of the intestines caused by the bacteria Campylobacter.

#### **What are the signs and symptoms of a Campylobacter infection?**

Signs and symptoms of this illness may include headache, abdominal pain, diarrhea, fever, nausea, and sometimes vomiting. Loss of appetite and loose stools often persist for several days. Dehydration, especially among infants, may be severe.

#### **How are Campylobacter infections spread?**

Campylobacteriosis is spread by eating food contaminated by the stool of an infected person, eating food obtained from animals infected with the bacteria, or having contact with feces from infected animals. Foods that may carry Campylobacter organisms include: unpasteurized milk, unpasteurized milk products, meat, meat products, and poultry.

#### **What is the incubation period of Campylobacter and how long is it contagious?**

The incubation period is usually one to seven days or longer depending on the amount of bacteria ingested. Persons are contagious throughout the course of infection, usually from several days to several weeks. Individuals not treated with antibiotics may excrete organisms for as long as two to three weeks, and relapse of symptoms may occur.

#### **What should I do if I think I have a Campylobacter infection?**

Persons who have these symptoms should see their physicians. Health care providers should report this disease to the Health Department. Parents should not send their children to school or daycare until their symptoms have resolved. Infected patients should drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration. Antibiotics will shorten illness time and clear bacteria from stool in two to three days.

#### **How can I prevent myself and others from getting a Campylobacter infection?**

Thoroughly cook all foods derived from animal sources, particularly poultry. Pasteurize all milk and chlorinate or boil all water supplies. Recognize and control diarrhea among household animals and pets. Wash hands frequently and thoroughly, particularly after contact with raw poultry or dog and cat feces.

For more information, please contact the Florida Department of Health in Orange County Epidemiology Program at 407-858-1420. You may also visit the Epidemiology Program website, <http://orchd.com/generalHealth/epidemiology/index.asp>, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website, <http://www.cdc.gov/nczved/divisions/dfbmd/diseases/campylobacter/>, or the DOH-Orange School Health website at <http://orchd.com/personalHealth/schoolHealth/index.asp> for additional information.

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