



Campylobacter patient information, 1 July 2004

Patient information and directions. Communicable Disease Prevention leaflet issued by the Swedish Society for Communicable Disease Prevention and Control.

What is Campylobacter infection?

You have been infected by the intestinal bacterium Campylobacter. The bacterium can give rise to symptoms such as diarrhoea (sometimes blood-streaked), stomach pains, fever and vomiting. The symptoms usually clear up after a week or so, but the infectious agent can remain in the intestine for several weeks. As a rule, the disease clears up on its own and antibiotics are only given in rare cases.

The bacteria are in the intestine

When you have diarrhoea there is some risk that you will spread the disease because you excrete more bacteria. It is unusual for people around an infected person to become infected. You can reduce the risk of passing on the infection by keeping your hands clean and observing good hygiene when you use the toilet.

A large number of domestic and wild animals can carry Campylobacter, particularly birds, but also cattle, pigs, dogs and cats. Infection is usually passed on via food and drink contaminated with the bacteria. The bacteria die when heated, so food that is well cooked and fried does not present any risk, unless it has been re-contaminated through the use of dirty kitchen knives, chopping boards, etc.

If you work in the medical or care services, or with food, it is particularly important that you stay at home until the diarrhoea has stopped and your faeces is normal. The same applies to children at daycare/preschools.

If you work with unpackaged food, you are obliged to tell your employer about your infection under the Food Act (*Livsmedelslagen*).

Do the following to prevent infection in others:

- * *Do not go to work when you have diarrhoea.*
- * *Wash your hands after using the toilet.*
- * *Use your own soap, preferably liquid soap, and your own towel.*
- * *If you have a child in nappies who is infected, put the used nappies in plastic bags. Throw these away in the household waste. Clean the changing table and wash your hands carefully after changing a nappy.*

You will find further advice on hygiene in the disease control leaflet "Hygiene advice in intestinal infections" (*Hygienråd vid tarmsmitta*), available from your doctor.

smittskyddsenheten

Centrallasarettet, 351 85 Växjö. ☎0470-588278