



## Campylobacteriosis (*campy*)

### What is Campylobacteriosis?

- 💧 Campylobacteriosis (*campy*) is a diarrhoeal disease of the intestines caused by the **bacterium** *Campylobacter jejuni*.
- 💧 Slight infections may have mild symptoms such as slight to severe diarrhoea, which may be bloody (dysenteric), together with abdominal cramps, fever and in severe cases, vomiting and convulsions.
- 💧 Symptoms generally appear 3 to 5 days after infection.

### How is Campylobacteriosis transmitted?

- 💧 This disease is mostly transmitted through the **faecal-oral route**.
- 💧 **Pets, poultry and cattle** are the most common animals that serve as reservoirs of the bacterium. Therefore impeccable hygiene is required when preparing poultry for cooking in order to prevent contamination of other foods and drinks.
- 💧 **Faecal excretion of animals** into water sources causes contamination. All raw water should therefore be chlorinated before it is consumed.
- 💧 **Humans** can also transmit the bacterium for a week or two after the infection has subsided.
- 💧 **Milk** can also cause infection. Do not drink unpasteurised milk.

### How can Campylobacteriosis patients be treated?

- 💧 Firstly, the patient must be **rehydrated** with fluids and salts.
- 💧 If the infection is severe, **antibiotic medication** will shorten the duration of the infection.
- 💧 **Children, the elderly and HIV positive patients** are most susceptible to and may recover much slower from the disease.

### How can Campylobacteriosis be prevented?

- 💧 Good personal hygiene, such as washing hands before eating and after going to the toilet, changing nappies or touching animals.
- 💧 Never eat any poultry that is undercooked, especially microwave-cooked poultry.
- 💧 Knives and cutting boards must be cleaned very thoroughly with soap and warm water after preparing poultry for cooking.
- 💧 Do not drink untreated water.
- 💧 Disinfect the water by adding 1 teaspoon of domestic bleach to 20 litres of water and leave for at least one hour before drinking. Cloudy water can be treated with an extra 2 to 3 teaspoons of bleach.

Reference: DWAF (2003). Management of water-related microbial diseases, Vol. 1.

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