

## How can I help reduce healthcare associated infections?

Infection prevention & control is important to the well-being of our patients and for that reason we have infection prevention & control procedures in place. Keeping your hands clean is an effective way of preventing the spread of infections. We ask that you, and anyone visiting you, use the hand sanitiser available at the entrance to every ward before coming in to and after leaving the ward. In some situations hands may need to be washed at the sink using soap and water rather than using the hand sanitiser as hand sanitisers are not suitable for use when dealing with patients who have symptoms of diarrhoea.

For infection prevention & control purposes and to keep you safe and well visitors are requested **not** to:

- Visit you if they are unwell or have been unwell in the previous 48 hours.
- Sit on your bed or use the patient toilets.
- Touch your wounds, or any medical devices, drips or catheters.

## How can I find out more?

Contact the Infection Prevention & Control Department on:  
Stoke Mandeville Hospital Tel: 01296 315337  
Public Health England Tel: 0344 225 3861 (option 4, option 1)  
NHS Choices Website: <http://www.nhs.uk/pages/home.aspx>

[www.buckshealthcare.nhs.uk](http://www.buckshealthcare.nhs.uk)

Follow us on Twitter @buckshealthcare

## What is Campylobacter?

### Patient information leaflet

If you require a translation or alternative format of this leaflet please call Infection Prevention & Control on 01296 315337

Safe & compassionate care,

every time

## What is Campylobacter?

Campylobacter is a bacteria that causes food poisoning, and it is one of the most common causes of food poisoning.

## Who gets Campylobacter?

Anyone can get campylobacter. Those at greater risk are:

- young children under 5 years
- over 60's
- people who work with farm animals or in the meat industry,
- travellers to developing countries

## How do you get Campylobacter?

Most cases of campylobacter are associated with handling raw or undercooked meat (especially poultry), unpasteurised milk, untreated water and touching domestic pets with diarrhoea.

Person-to-person spread may occur if personal hygiene is poor.

A very small number of this bacteria is needed to cause illness.

## What are the symptoms of Campylobacter?

Symptoms include diarrhoea (may be bloody), vomiting, stomach pains, cramps, fever and generally feeling unwell.

These symptoms usually develop within 2 – 5 days after becoming infected but can take as long as 10 days. The average time for this illness is approximately 7 days.

Some people who are infected with campylobacter may not have any symptoms at all.

Campylobacter infection is a Notifiable Illness to Public Health England via the Local Authority.

## How is Campylobacter treated?

Most people will recover without any specific treatment.

In more severe cases, antibiotics can be used and can shorten the duration of symptoms if they are given early on in the illness. Your doctor will make the decision about whether antibiotics are necessary.

You should drink plenty of fluids while the diarrhoea lasts. While you are in hospital you will be nursed in a side room and nursing staff will wear gloves and aprons to protect you and other patients. You will have to stay in isolation for 48 hours after your diarrhoea has stopped as a precaution.

## How can I avoid catching Campylobacter?

If you have not received the "Good Hand Hygiene Benefits Everyone" leaflet please ask the nurse for one.

- Hand washing thoroughly with soap and water:
  - Before preparing and eating food
  - After handling raw food
  - After going to the toilet or changing a baby's nappy
  - After contact with pets and other animals
- Do not wash raw chicken before you cook it to avoid cross contamination of surfaces
- Keep cooked food away from raw food
- Cook food thoroughly especially meat
- Keep all kitchen surfaces and equipment including knives, chopping boards and dish cloths clean
- Do not drink untreated water from lakes, rivers or streams or unpasteurised milk.

## Do I need to stay off work or school?

**Yes**, while you are ill and have symptoms you are infectious.

**You can return to work or school once you have been free from diarrhoea for 48 hours.**