

## Helicobacter pylori (H. pylori) infection

### Overview:

- Helicobacter pylori (H. pylori) is a spiral shaped bacterium that lives and multiplies in the lining of the stomach.
- Helicobacter pylori is a common cause of many stomach diseases including peptic ulcers.
- H. pylori bacteria may be passed from person to person through contaminated food or water, or through sharing eating utensils with an infected person.
- The main symptoms are: Pain and swelling in the abdomen, and loss of appetite.
- The best way to prevent an H. pylori infection is by avoiding contaminated food or water, and not sharing utensils with others.

### Definition of H. pylori infection:

Helicobacter pylori (H. pylori) is a spiral shaped bacterium that lives and multiplies in the lining of the stomach, and it is a common cause of many stomach diseases including peptic ulcers. Once infected, a person usually stays infected for life unless they are treated with specific antibiotics.

### Other names:

H. pylori - campylobacter pylori - spiral bacteria.

### Causes:

H. pylori bacteria may be passed from person to person through contaminated food and water, unclean utensils or direct contact with saliva from an infected person.



### Risk factors:

- Living with someone who has an H. pylori infection.
- Living without a reliable supply of clean water
- Living in a crowded developing country.

### Symptoms:

- Nausea or vomiting.
- Bloating.
- Frequent burping.
- Abdominal pain.
- Heartburn.
- Loss of appetite.

### When to see a doctor:

Seek immediate medical help if you experience the following symptoms:

- Severe or persistent abdominal pain.
- Blood in vomit
- Bloody or black tarry stool.
- Unexplained weight loss.

### Complications:

- Inflammation of the stomach lining.
- Stomach ulcers.
- Internal bleeding.
- Stomach cancer.

### Diagnosis:

- Urea breath test: during a breath test, the patient is asked to blow into and fill a balloon with a breath of air, after ingesting a urea capsule.
- Laboratory Tests: Stool test.

- Scope test and taking tissue samples.

Blood tests are not very effective in detecting an H. pylori infection, and doctors don't base their medical decision on the results of these tests.

#### Treatment:

- Antibiotics.
- Proton pump inhibitors (PPIs).
- Histamine (H-2) blockers.

#### Prevention:

- Make sure to wash your hands after using the bathroom and before preparing and eating your meals.
- It is important to make sure that your water is sanitized, especially water coming from wells.
- Make sure to thoroughly wash fruits and vegetables.
- Avoid sharing eating and drinking utensils with others.

#### Frequently Asked Questions:

- **Is an H. pylori infection contagious?**

The exact way H. pylori infects someone is still unknown. However, studies have shown an increase in household H. pylori infections if the infected member is not isolated and the food water source are kept clean.

- **Can an H. pylori infection cause cancer?**

Yes, in certain rare cases. That's why it is important to pay attention to the symptoms and seek medical attention.

- **Does pomegranate peel treat an H. pylori infection?**

There are no conclusive studies that prove this.



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- **Can an H. pylori infection be treated with honey?**

There are no conclusive studies that prove this. However, lack of evidence does not deny or disprove the benefits of honey.

**Misconceptions:**

- **An H. pylori infection can be treated with surgery.**

**Fact:** H. pylori infections are only treated with medications.

- **Blowing on food may lead to disease transmission.**

**Fact:** This is not true, but it is a bad habit that you should try to avoid.

- **An H. pylori infection can be treated with vinegar or cress.**

**Fact:** H. pylori infections can't be treated with vinegar or cress.

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For further questions kindly contact us via email:

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