

## Campylobacter

*Campylobacteriosis is a Class C Disease. It must be reported to the state within five business days.*

Campylobacter is the most common bacterial cause of diarrheal illness in the United States. It is caused by the bacteria *Campylobacter jejuni* and less commonly, *C. coli*.

### Epidemiology

The most common reservoir for *Campylobacter* is poultry and cattle, with more than half of the raw chicken in the United States market containing the bacteria. Water or milk may be a source for sporadic cases or outbreaks. Most cases of campylobacteriosis are associated with handling of raw poultry or eating raw or undercooked poultry meat. A main source of cross-contamination of raw or lightly cooked foods is the use of cutting boards that have not been cleaned thoroughly after cutting poultry or meat.

Animals (puppies, kittens, other pets, swine, sheep, rodents and birds) can also be infected. Some people acquire their infections from contact with the infected stool of an ill dog or cat. It is estimated that approximately 5% of human cases originate from contact with pets, particularly dogs and cats. In a 1985-published survey carried out in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, the prevalence of *Campylobacter* among cats was estimated at 1%.

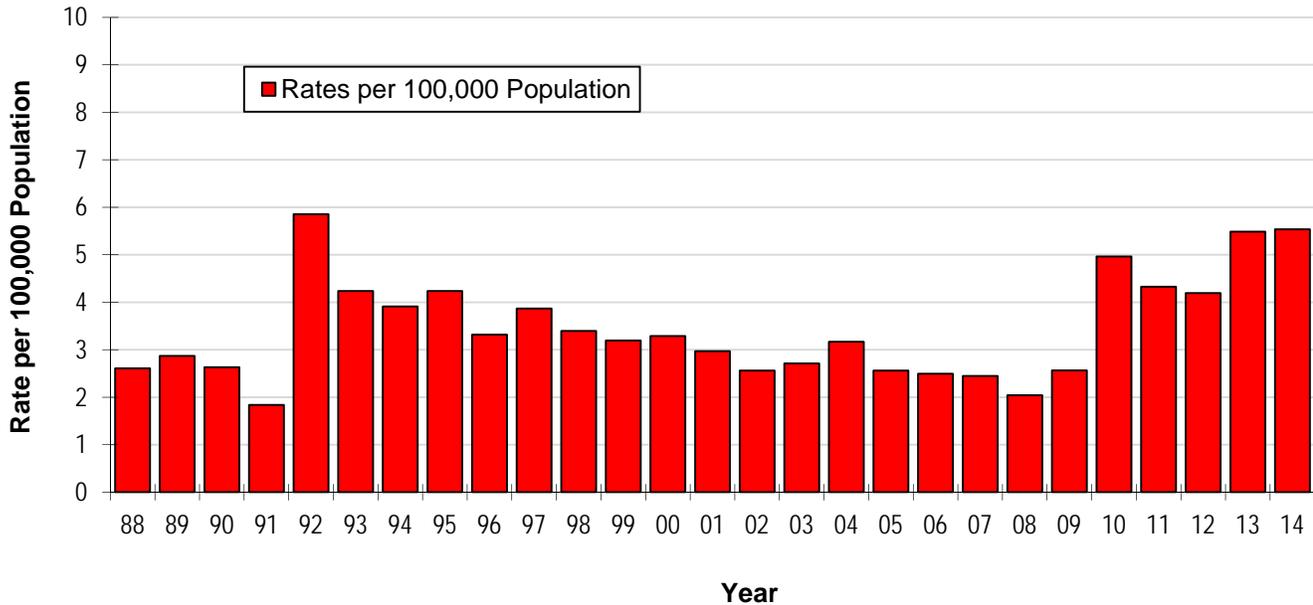
The organism is not usually spread from person-to-person, but person-to-person contact can result in illness if the infected person is a small child, or is producing a large volume of diarrhea. Although many cases of *Campylobacter* infection are asymptomatic, symptoms can include diarrhea, abdominal pain, malaise, fever, nausea and vomiting.

Campylobacteriosis is estimated to affect over 2.4 million persons every year with many cases going undiagnosed or unreported. Even though surveillance is very limited, approximately six cases for each 100,000 persons in the U.S. population are reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In Louisiana, the reported incidence is about three cases per 100,000 persons. Virtually all cases occur as isolated, sporadic events, rather than as a part of outbreaks. Although campylobacteriosis does not commonly cause death, it has been estimated that approximately 124 persons with *Campylobacter* infections die each year.

### Incidence

Reporting of *Campylobacter* began in Louisiana in 1988. The year with the highest number of reported cases was 1992 (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Campylobacter cases and incidence rates - Louisiana, 1988-2014



The age group distribution is similar to that of most enteric diseases, with the highest rates in infants and young children (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Campylobacter incidence rates by gender and age - Louisiana, 1988-2014

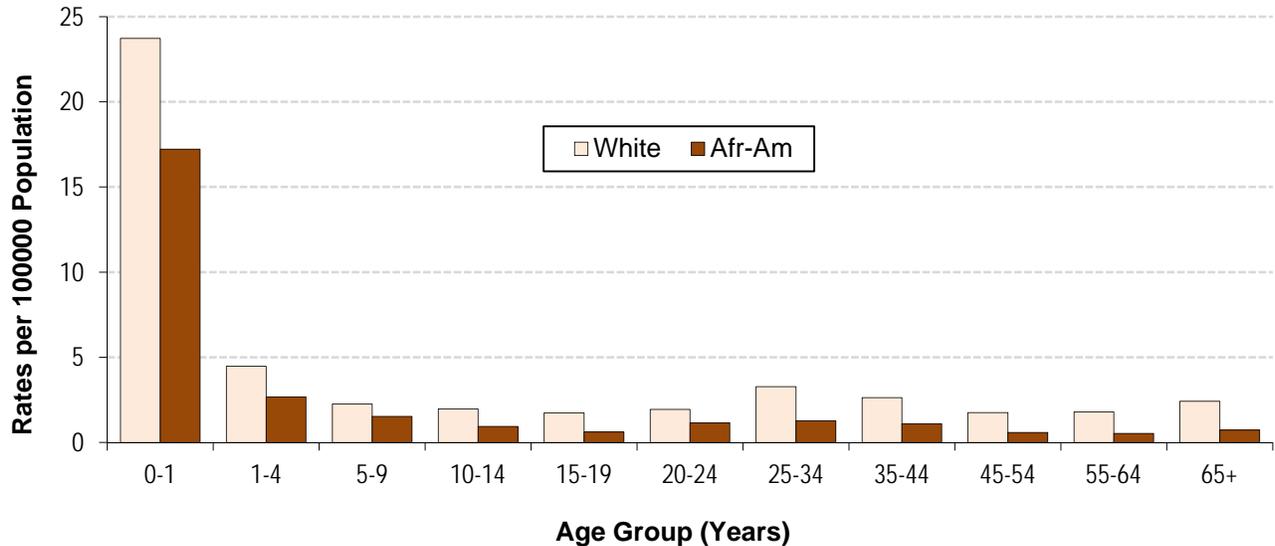


The highest rates are observed among infants, an age group that is not thought of as routinely being exposed to poultry meat. These cases result from cross-contamination when infants are fed. High infant

rates are partially attributable to reporting bias, i.e., infants with diarrhea are more likely to be brought to medical care and more likely to have stool cultures done than older children or adults. A slight increase in rates is also seen among the elderly.

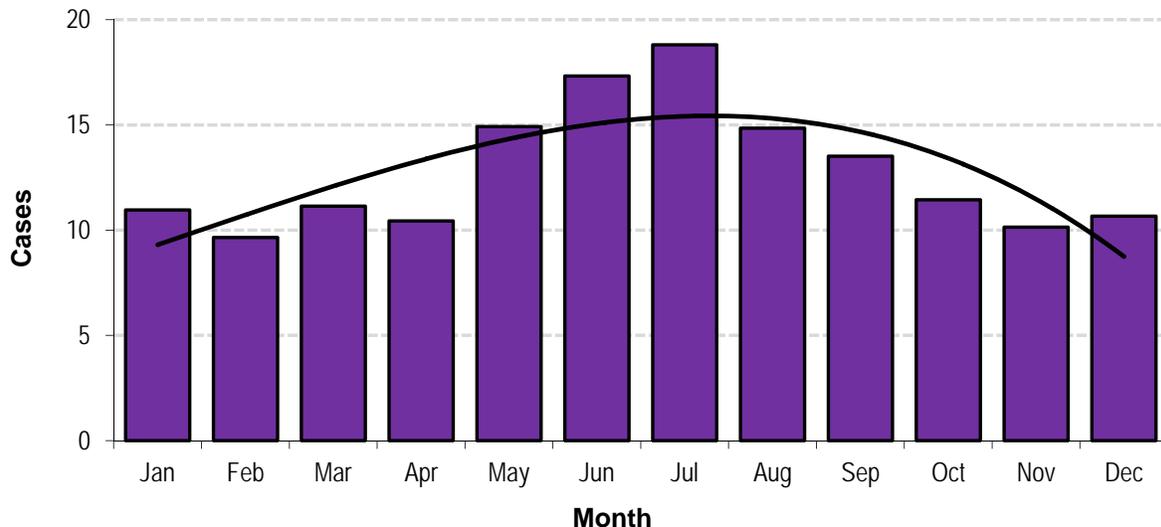
The distribution by race and age shows higher rates among Whites than among African-Americans in most age groups, particularly among infants younger than one year-old (Figure 3).

Figure 3: *Campylobacter* incidence rates by race and age - Louisiana, 1988-2014



*Campylobacter* has a clear seasonal distribution, with an increased number of cases reported during the summer months (Figure 4).

Figure 4: *Campylobacter* average annual cases by seasonal distribution - Louisiana, 1988-2014



The geographical distribution of *Campylobacter* in Louisiana reflects the reporting of *Campylobacter* cases and not the true distribution of cases (Table).

Table: *Campylobacter* average annual incidence rates by parish - Louisiana, 1988-2014

Region	Parish	Rate 1988-2014	Region	Parish	Rate 1988-2014
1	Jefferson	2.98	6	Concordia	1.07
	Orleans	3.17		Grant	3.22
	Plaquemines	1.74		La Salle	3.14
	St. Bernard	2.01		Rapides	4.43
2	Ascension	3.30	7	Vernon	2.21
	E. Baton Rouge	4.38		Winn	2.27
	E. Feliciana	2.84		Bienville	1.44
	Iberville	1.78		Bossier	2.70
	Pointe Coupee	1.71		Caddo	2.03
	W. Baton Rouge	3.14		Claiborne	1.27
	W. Feliciana	1.69		De Soto	1.23
3	Assumption	3.99	8	Natchitoches	1.66
	Lafourche	3.29		Red River	3.03
	St. Charles	2.15		Sabine	1.20
	St. James	1.88		Webster	2.76
	St. John	2.06		Caldwell	4.90
	St. Mary	1.17		E. Carroll	1.75
	Terrebonne	10.68		Franklin	2.50
4	Acadia	1.66	9	Jackson	3.64
	Evangeline	4.76		Lincoln	1.63
	Iberia	3.06		Madison	0.60
	Lafayette	4.31		Morehouse	3.84
	St. Landry	4.63		Ouachita	3.49
	St. Martin	2.92		Richland	1.91
	Vermilion	5.82		Tensas	0.00
	Union	3.05			
5	Allen	1.93	9	W. Carroll	4.36
	Beauregard	2.34		Livingston	5.83
	Calcasieu	2.92		St. Helena	2.94
	Cameron	1.22		St. Tammany	3.89
	Jefferson Davis	6.94		Tangipahoa	3.85
6	Avoyelles	2.33	9	Washington	5.65
	Catahoula	3.35			