

## I think I may have one of these bugs - what should I do?

If you think you or one of your family have one of these bugs, see your health nurse or doctor and tell them about your work with animals.

They can arrange any necessary tests, make sure you get the right treatment, and give you advice.

## When can we return to work and school?

Your health nurse or your doctor can advise you when you can return to work.



**Meat industry and dairy workers have higher infection rates than the general public**

## For further information please contact:

Your local doctor  
Your Occupational (Work) Health Nurse  
Community & Public Health  
WorkSafe  
Ministry for Primary Industries

## COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC HEALTH

Other resources available on illnesses, pasteurising (home treating) milk, safe food and safe gardening:

[www.cph.co.nz](http://www.cph.co.nz)

### Christchurch Office

310 Manchester Street | P.O Box 1475  
Christchurch  
Phone: 03 378 6721  
Email: [chic@cdhb.health.nz](mailto:chic@cdhb.health.nz)

### West Coast Office

3 Tarapuhi Street | P.O Box 443  
Greymouth  
Phone: 03 768 1160  
Email: [westcoast.chic@cdhb.health.nz](mailto:westcoast.chic@cdhb.health.nz)

### Ashburton Office

Elizabeth Street | P.O Box 110  
Ashburton  
Phone: 03 307 6902  
Email: [ashburton.chic@cdhb.health.nz](mailto:ashburton.chic@cdhb.health.nz)

### Timaru Office

18 Woollcombe Street | P.O Box 510  
Timaru  
Phone: 03 687 2600  
Email: [timaru.chic@cdhb.health.nz](mailto:timaru.chic@cdhb.health.nz)  
[www.cph.co.nz](http://www.cph.co.nz)

Communicable Diseases  
Community and Public Health  
(a division of the Canterbury District Health Board)  
med 0255/2016

**Canterbury**  
District Health Board  
Te Poari Hauora o Waitaha



**Health information for  
Farming, Dairy and  
Meat Industry families**

**Keeping you and  
your family well**

## Working with animals means you need to take special care to protect yourself

Certain bugs carried in blood, manure (poo) or urine of cattle, poultry, pigs, sheep, birds and/or household pets can make you ill. These bugs can be passed on to you through direct contact with animal blood, poo or urine or through contaminated food or water.

Some of the common bugs that are spread through either infected blood, poo or urine of animals are:

- Campylobacter (Campy)
- Cryptosporidium (Crypto)
- Salmonella
- Yersinia
- Giardia
- Leptospirosis
- E.coli (VTEC/ STEC)

Symptoms of these zoonotic (from animals) illnesses can include diarrhoea, abdominal pain, fever, headache, vomiting.

Catching one of these bugs usually means you will need time off work or school to recover. You could be very sick, depending on the bug you catch. Care is needed to avoid passing on these bugs to other people.

These diseases can be caught at any time of the year. More people are affected in Spring. This is because Spring is the start of calving and lambing on farms, and high activity within the meat industry.

## How can I avoid getting these bugs?

Washing your hands is a simple but important way of reducing the chance of picking up bugs that can make you sick.

- Remember the 20 + 20 rule for clean hands
- Wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and hot water
- Dry your hands for 20 seconds with a clean, dry towel or paper towel

## Wash your hands...

### Before:

- Preparing or eating food
- Drinking
- Smoking
- Taking a break
- Going home

### After:

- Handling raw meat
- Handling animals
- Going to the toilet
- Gardening or handling soil



## Wear Protective Gear

- Wear protective gear to ensure you have a barrier between yourself and animal poo, urine, soil, contaminated water or fluids
- Do not reuse disposable protective equipment

## Avoid Splashes

- Cover cuts and broken skin with a water proof, clean dressing
- Avoid splashes to your eyes, mouth and skin
- If you are splashed, wash the area straight away and seek first aid advice
- If you get sick see your health nurse or doctor

## What can I do at home?

- Change out of your work clothes and wash your hands before going home
- Wash work clothes separately
- Store work equipment such as protective gear and shoes outside your home
- Teach children how to wash their hands, and supervise them while they do it
- Supervise children on farm activities and when handling animals e.g. hand rearing calves or lambs
- Pasteurise (heat treat) raw milk before drinking it
- Make sure meat is properly cooked before eating
- Keep animals away from water that people use for swimming or drinking
- When gardening, use protective gear and wash your hands
- If you or your family have symptoms see your health nurse or a doctor. In the meantime -
  - allow only well people to prepare food
  - bath sick children separately
  - stay out of swimming pools until you are well
  - use separate towels and change them daily
  - sanitise surfaces, bathrooms and toilets with disinfectant regularly

Protect Yourself  
Be Informed

Protect Yourself  
Wear Protective Gear

Protect Yourself  
Be Seen to Be Clean