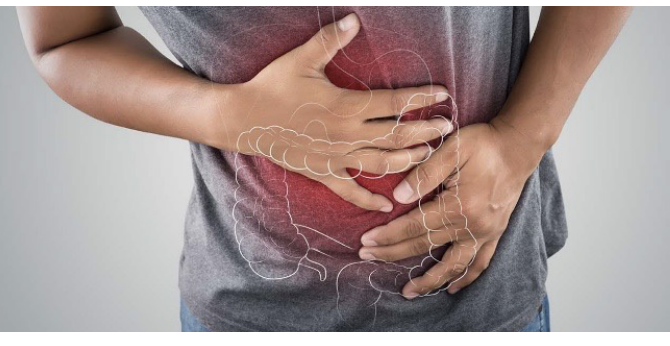


Infectious disorders of the gastrointestinal (GI) tract



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Infectious disorders of the gastrointestinal (GI) tract are illnesses caused by microorganisms, such as bacteria, viruses, parasites, and fungi, that invade and multiply within the digestive system. These infections can lead to a range of symptoms, from mild discomfort to severe illness.



Common infectious disorders of the GI tract include:

1. Gastroenteritis:

This is a common condition characterised by inflammation of the stomach and intestines. It is usually caused by viruses (e.g., Norovirus or Rotavirus), bacteria (e.g., Salmonella or E. coli), or parasites (e.g., Giardia). Symptoms include diarrhoea, vomiting, abdominal pain, and fever.

2. Salmonellosis:

Caused by the bacterium Salmonella, this infection results in symptoms like diarrhoea, abdominal cramps, fever, and vomiting. Contaminated food and water are common sources of infection.

3. Campylobacter Infection:

Campylobacter bacteria often lead to gastroenteritis, with symptoms like diarrhoea, abdominal pain, and fever. Contaminated poultry and unpasteurised milk are frequent sources of infection.

4. E. coli Infection:

Certain strains of Escherichia coli can cause severe diarrhoea, cramps, and, in some cases, kidney problems. E. coli infections are often associated with undercooked ground beef or contaminated produce.



5. Norovirus Infection:

Norovirus is a highly contagious virus responsible for many cases of foodborne illness and outbreaks on cruise ships. Symptoms include vomiting, diarrhoea, and stomach cramps.

6. Rotavirus Infection:

This virus primarily affects infants and young children, causing severe diarrhoea and vomiting. Rotavirus vaccines have been developed to reduce the incidence of this infection.

7. Giardiasis:

Giardia Lamblia is a parasite that causes giardiasis. Infection results in diarrhoea, stomach cramps, and bloating. Contaminated water sources are a common route of transmission.



8. Amebiasis:

Amebiasis is caused by the parasite Entamoeba Histolytica and can lead to dysentery, liver abscesses, and other severe complications. It is often transmitted through contaminated food or water.

9. Cholera:

Cholera is caused by the bacterium Vibrio Cholerae. It leads to profuse watery diarrhea and can be life-threatening if left untreated. Contaminated water and food are sources of infection.

10. Clostridium Difficile Infection (C. diff):

This bacterium can overgrow in the colon, often after taking antibiotics. It causes severe diarrhoea, and abdominal pain, and can be challenging to treat.

11. Helicobacter Pylori:

commonly referred to as H. pylori, is a contributing factor to gastritis and is linked to the formation of gastric and duodenal ulcers. It may result in symptoms such as stomach pain or nausea, though it frequently remains asymptomatic. Individuals who are infected with H. pylori face a lifetime risk of %20-10 for peptic ulcer development and a 1 to %2 risk of stomach cancer.

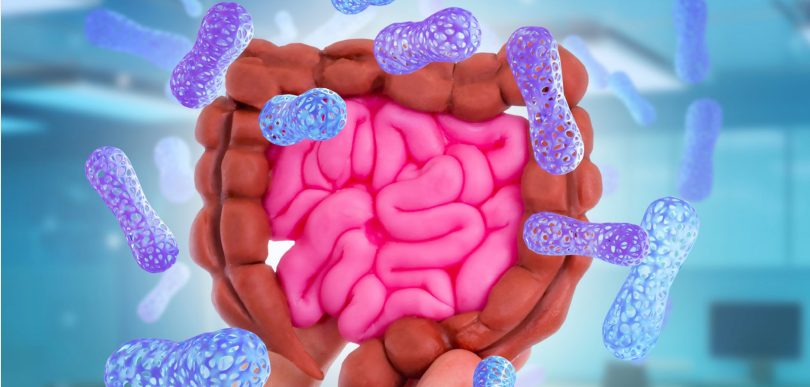
Read more:

<https://www.healthline.com/health/gastrointestinal-infection#when-to-go-to-the-doctor>

Diagnosis of infectious disorders of the gastrointestinal (GI) tract

When symptoms suggest the presence of a potential gastrointestinal infection, laboratory tests can be employed to confirm the diagnosis. These tests typically involve the culture of stool specimens or the detection of antigens.

In specific instances, such as infections caused by E. coli, Salmonella, or C. Difficile, antibiotic susceptibility testing may be necessary to assess microbial resistance and guide antibiotic treatment, if applicable.



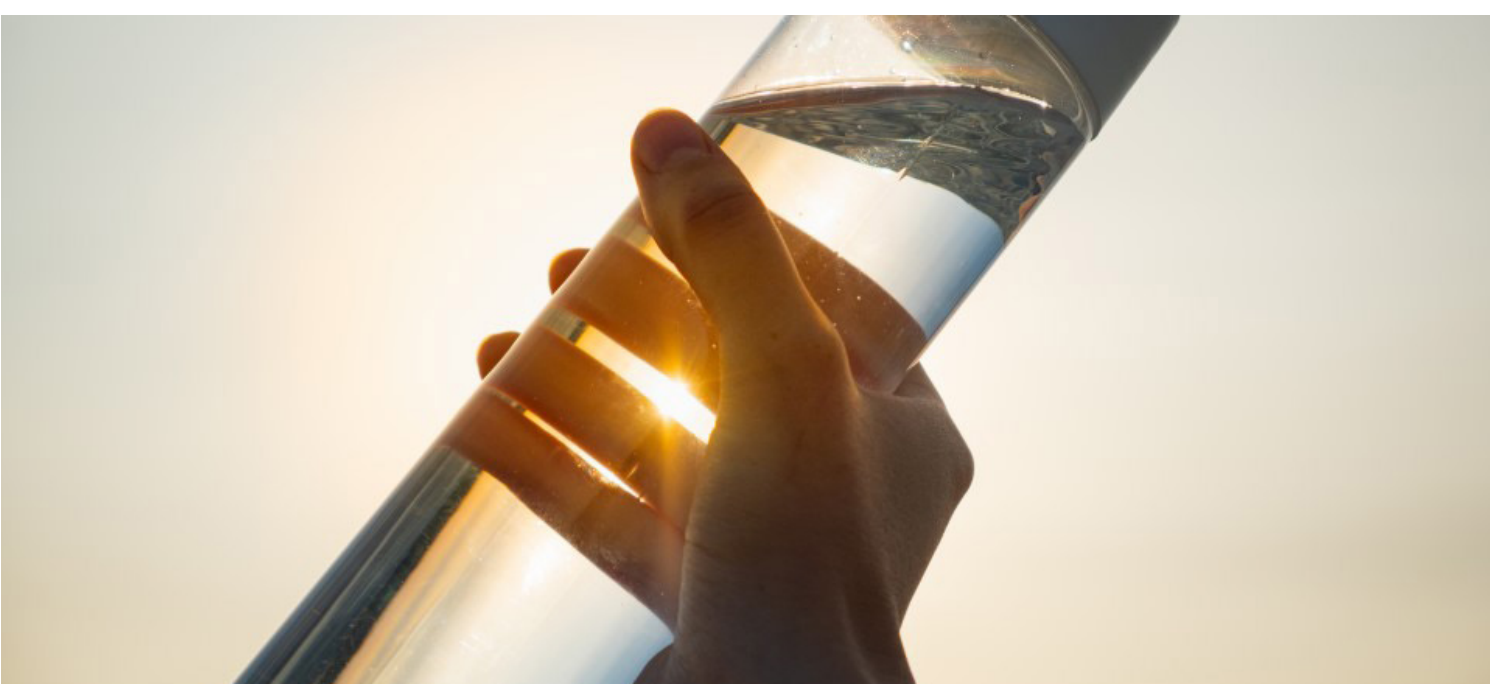
Treatment of infectious disorders of the gastrointestinal (GI) tract

Prevention / Treatment

The best ways to prevent gastrointestinal infection include:

- Handwashing
- Sanitising contaminated surfaces using bleach
- Laundering soiled clothing
- Prompt identification of infected patients to enable enhanced infection control measures.
- There are no vaccines for most gastrointestinal infections. Exceptions:
 - Rotavirus
 - Adenovirus (limited availability)

- For Clostridioides Difficile: avoid prescribing antibiotics unnecessarily.



Treatment measures for gastrointestinal infection include:

- Rehydration, which may involve oral or, in some cases, intravenous fluids.
- In many instances of bacterial gastroenteritis, symptomatic treatment is sufficient to address issues like fever and diarrhoea.
- Typically, antibiotics are not advised due to their ineffectiveness against viral infections, potential side effects, and the risk of promoting antibiotic-resistant bacteria through overuse.
- Antibiotics might be considered in especially severe cases of gastroenteritis or when a specific bacterial culprit has been identified as the source of the illness.

Learn more: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7123654/>
<https://www.healthline.com/health/gastrointestinal-infection>