



FACT SHEET

Vibrio

Common clinical features

Vibrio species are uncommon causes of infectious intestinal disease in the UK. One species, *Vibrio cholerae* is the cause of cholera, a severe diarrhoeal disease. *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* is the most common species causing food poisoning in the UK. This causes watery diarrhoea and abdominal cramps in the majority of cases, occasionally with nausea, vomiting fever and headache. Occasionally a dysentery like illness is seen with blood and mucus in the stools and a high fever. More commonly it is a disease of moderate severity lasting 1-7 days.

Incubation period

Usually 12 - 24 hours.

Where is it found?

V.cholerae: Human gastrointestinal tract, sewage and contaminated water. Infections are usually acquired when travelling abroad, more commonly to developing countries.

V. parahaemolyticus: In fish or shellfish.

How is it acquired by affected individuals?

V. cholerae: This infection occurs as a result of ingestion of contaminated food or water and by eating salads, fruits or vegetables which have been washed in contaminated water.

V. parahaemolyticus: By eating raw or inadequately cooked seafood.

How does the laboratory confirm the diagnosis?

The bacteria can be cultured from faeces on selective media. Results are usually available within 2 or 3 days. The tests will be carried out only if the history and symptoms strongly suggest infection with Vibrio.

In this **study** all samples will be tested by a molecular test (Luminex xTAG® GPP) for *Vibrio cholera* and results will be available within 24 hours.

How is it treated?

Symptomatic treatment and rehydration with antibiotics for the more severe cases.