

APPENDIX 3: Symptoms and incubation periods for common IID pathogens

Organism (click to follow links)	Typical Signs and Symptoms	Incubation Period*	Duration of Illness
Bacteria			
<u><i>Campylobacter</i></u>	Diarrhoea, abdominal pain, fever, vomiting, bloody diarrhoea in half of cases.	1-10 days (typically 2-5 days).	2-10 days
<u><i>Listeria monocytogenes</i></u>	Tends to be a mild 'flu-like illness with fever, muscle aches and nausea and diarrhoea. In the elderly or immunocompromised (for example, due to cancer, diabetes or AIDS) it may be complicated by meningitis or septicaemia. If a pregnant woman contracts the infection, it can lead to miscarriage or still birth, or septicaemia or meningitis in the baby soon after delivery.	1 day to 3 months (typically about 3 weeks).	Variable
<u><i>Salmonella enterica</i> spp. (Non-typhoidal salmonellae)</u>	Diarrhoea, fever, abdominal cramps, vomiting, occasionally muscle cramps and headache.	12-72 hours	3-7 days
<u><i>Salmonella Typhi</i> and <i>Paratyphi</i> (Typhoid and Paratyphoid; Enteric Fever)</u>	Typhoid enteric fever is a severe illness with fever, headache, cough, constipation followed by diarrhoea, characteristic skin rash (rose spots), abdominal pain and confusion. Paratyphoid enteric fever is less severe. Paratyphoid can also produce a severe gastroenteritis with diarrhoea and vomiting.	1-3 weeks 1-10 days for paratyphoid gastroenteritis	Up to 3 months
<u><i>Shigella</i> spp.</u>	A wide variety of illness depending on the particular species, ranging from mild diarrhoea to severe illness with pain, watery diarrhoea (often with blood or mucus), fever, and collapse.	12-96 hours (can be up to one week).	1-2 weeks
<u>Verotoxigenic <i>E. coli</i> (VTEC)</u>	Can vary, from a mild illness with little or no symptoms, to moderate or severe bloody diarrhoea, with abdominal pain (haemorrhagic colitis). Vomiting and fever are uncommon.	1-8 days (typically 3-4 days).	5-10 days
<u><i>Vibrio cholerae</i> (Cholera)</u>	Severe watery diarrhoea, occasional vomiting. Dehydration can be life threatening.	6-48 hours	1-3 weeks
<u><i>Yersinia enterocolitica</i> and <i>Y. pseudotuberculosis</i></u>	Generally diarrhoea with some vomiting. May be some bloody diarrhoea. <i>Y. pseudotuberculosis</i> can produce appendicitis-like symptoms.	2-11 days (typically 4-7 days).	1-3 weeks, usually self-limiting
Protozoa			
<u><i>Cryptosporidium</i></u>	Diarrhoea (usually watery and with mucus), stomach cramps, upset stomach, slight fever.	1-28 days (typically 2-10 days).	Generally 2-4 weeks
<u><i>Giardia lamblia</i></u>	There may be no symptoms or diarrhoea, stomach cramps, flatulence and bloating.	7-10 days	Days to weeks
Viruses			
<u>Norovirus</u>	Nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramping, diarrhoea, fever, myalgia, and some headache. Diarrhoea is more prevalent in adults and vomiting is more prevalent in children.	15-50 hours	4-70 hours
<u>Rotavirus</u>	Watery diarrhoea, vomiting with mild fever. Commonest between 6 months and 2 years.	1-3 days	About a week