



Indiana State Department of Health

Epidemiology Resource Center

Quick Facts

About...Salmonellosis

What is salmonellosis?

Salmonellosis (sal-mun-nel-lo-sis) is a disease caused by *Salmonella* bacteria, which are found in the intestines of many healthy animals, including poultry, farm animals and domestic animals (dogs, cats, and birds), wild birds, reptiles, and amphibians. There are thousands of types of *Salmonella* bacteria, most of which can infect humans. Illness can vary from mild diarrhea to serious disease.

What are the symptoms of salmonellosis?

- Diarrhea, which may be bloody
- Stomach cramps
- Fever
- Upset stomach
- Vomiting

Symptoms can begin 12-36 hours (range of 6-72 hours) after exposure and last 4-7 days. Infected people may carry *Salmonella* in their bodies for weeks or months without experiencing any symptoms and infect others.

How is salmonellosis spread?

Salmonella is passed in the stool, and people become infected by ingesting feces from an infected animal or person. There are many ways to become infected with *Salmonella*:

- Eating contaminated foods:
 - Raw or undercooked eggs, seafood, meats, or poultry
 - Raw (unpasteurized) dairy products
 - Unwashed raw fruits, vegetables, or herbs that have been contaminated by feces, raw meats, fertilizers, or untreated water.
- Swallowing untreated water

- Having direct contact with the stool of infected livestock, birds, petting zoos, and reptiles.
- Having contact with an infected person's stool.

Who is at risk for getting salmonellosis?

Anyone can become ill, but young children, senior adults, pregnant women, and immune suppressed individuals (such as patients on cancer drugs and with organ transplants) are at high risk for illness.

How do I know if I have salmonellosis?

A person having diarrhea lasting more than 24 hours should consult a health care provider. The health care provider may collect a stool sample to test.

How is salmonellosis treated?

Most people recover within 5 to 7 days without treatment. Since diarrhea can cause dehydration, an ill person should drink plenty of fluids. Treatment with antibiotics is used in severe cases only.

How is salmonellosis prevented?

- Wash hands with soap and water after using the restroom; after assisting someone with diarrhea and/or vomiting; after contact with animals and reptiles; after swimming; and before, during, and after food preparation.
- Clean food preparation work surfaces, equipment, and utensils with soap and water before, during, and after food preparation.
- Separate raw and cooked foods.
- Maintain safe food temperatures.
- Do not eat undercooked meat, poultry, eggs, unpasteurized dairy products, and unwashed produce.
- Use treated water for washing, cooking, and drinking.
- Wash hands after contact with livestock, petting zoos, pets (including reptiles and amphibians) and after contact with pet food/treats.
- Do not clean pet or reptile cages in the kitchen sink or in the bathtub.

All information presented is intended for public use. For more information, please refer to: <http://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/>

Food and Drug Administration, Food Facts for Consumers:
<http://www.fda.gov/Food/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/ucm077286.htm>

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