

Salmonella

What is *Salmonella*?

Salmonella is a bacterium that causes an illness called salmonellosis. This illness affects the stomach and intestines.

How do I get salmonellosis?

You must ingest (swallow or eat) the *Salmonella* bacteria to become sick. *Salmonella* bacteria is usually spread through the following:

- *Salmonella* can be found in raw foods from animal origin (poultry and other meats, eggs, unpasteurized milk).
- Raw meats, raw meat juices and raw eggs can spread the bacteria if they touch ready-to-eat foods (salads, breads, cheeses, etc.), food preparation surfaces and utensils (cutting boards, plates, knives, etc.) or hands.
- People who are infected with *Salmonella* will have the bacteria in their feces (stools). If people do not properly wash their hands after using the restroom or changing a diaper, and then touch food others will eat or objects people will put in their mouths (e.g., toys), they can spread the bacteria to other people.
- *Salmonella* can be spread to you when you handle or clean up after animals such as cats, dogs, rodents, birds and reptiles.
- *Salmonella* is **NOT** spread from one person to another by coughing or sneezing, sharing drinks, hugging or kissing.

Symptoms

Symptoms usually begin within 12-72 hours after ingesting the *Salmonella* bacteria. Some infected people may not have any symptoms, but still are able to spread the bacteria. Symptoms include:

- Diarrhea (sometimes with blood)
- Nausea (sometimes with vomiting)
- Dehydration (due to diarrhea and vomiting)
- Fever
- Headache
- Stomach pain and cramping

Prevention

- Cook meats and eggs until well done. Poultry is done at 165°F, and eggs are done at 145°F.
- Do not eat foods containing raw eggs or unpasteurized milk.
- Wash your hands, and sanitize food preparation surfaces and utensils after handling raw meat or eggs.
- Always wash your hands after using the restroom.
- Wash your hands and the child's hands after diapering or helping with toilet training.
- Wash hands after handling pets (or other animals) or cleaning up after animals.



Hand washing steps:

1. Use soap and warm running water.
2. Scrub hands for at least 20 seconds; use a nail brush.
3. Wash all surfaces:
 - Between fingers
 - Under fingernails
 - Back of hands
 - Wrists
4. Rinse well and dry hands with a clean paper towel.

Treatment of salmonellosis

Most symptoms will go away on their own in a few days. If symptoms persist or are severe, see your health care provider.

If you think you have salmonellosis:

- Do not prepare food for others.
- If your job includes handling food, working with children or if you work in health care, do not go to work and see your health care provider.
- Children who might have salmonellosis should not go to child care settings – especially if they have diarrhea.