

# Salmonella

## What is *Salmonella*?

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

## How do I get salmonellosis?

People must ingest (swallow or eat) the *Salmonella* bacteria to become infected.

*Salmonella* lives in the intestines of humans and animals.

- *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 diapers, and then handle 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 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.

## What are the symptoms of salmonellosis?

Symptoms usually begin within 12-72 hours after ingesting the *Salmonella* bacteria.

Symptoms include:

- Diarrhea (sometimes bloody)
- Fever
- Abdominal cramps
- Nausea and vomiting
- Headache
- Dehydration (due to diarrhea and vomiting)



**Always wash your hands after handling raw meat or raw eggs to reduce your risk of illness from *Salmonella*.**

## What is the treatment for 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 involves handling food, working with children or if you work in healthcare, 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) and should see a health care provider.

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## How do I prevent salmonellosis?

- 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.

### Did you know?

Live baby poultry like chicks, ducklings, and baby birds can have *Salmonella* in their droppings and on their bodies. Touching the animal or anything in the area they live can expose you. Always:

- Wash hands after touching poultry or anything they've contacted (cages, coops, hay, soil).
- Monitor children around poultry on display at stores.
- Prevent children under 5 or people with weakened immune systems from handling poultry.



- Clean and disinfect any equipment or materials used to raise poultry outside the home.

### Did you know?

Reptiles and amphibians like snakes, frogs and lizards can have *Salmonella* in their stool and on their bodies. Touching the animal or anything in the area they live can expose you!

Always:

- Wash hands after handling reptiles or anything they've contacted.
- Clean and disinfect their cages outside of the home.
- Keep reptiles out of homes with children under 5 or people with weakened immune systems.
- Prevent your reptile from roaming around the house.



### Why does the health department investigate *Salmonella*?

- It is the responsibility of the local health department to investigate *Salmonella* in the community. The health department keeps track of how many people are getting the disease and works to limit the number of people exposed.
- The health department investigates outbreaks of *Salmonella* in an attempt to identify the source of illness and to prevent further spread of the disease.
- The health department works with people whose jobs involve handling food, working in child care, or working in health care to determine when it is safe for them to resume their normal job duties. The health department also works to determine when it is safe for children who have *Salmonella* to return to child care.

