

Salmonella

FACT SHEET



Washtenaw County
Health Department

What is Salmonellosis?

Salmonellosis is a disease caused by a group of bacteria called **Salmonella**, which get into the intestines. Salmonella is usually found in contaminated foods such as beef, poultry, unpasteurized milk, or raw eggs. However, all foods, including fruits and vegetables, can become contaminated with Salmonella.

How is it spread?

People get Salmonella from eating contaminated food, from handling raw meats, or from infected people who do not wash their hands after using the toilet. Salmonella is also found in pets, including turtles, iguanas, chicks, dogs and cats.

How is it treated?

If you have Salmonella you should:

- Drink plenty of fluids (such as water or juice).
- Not prepare food.
- Wash your hands after using the bathroom or changing diapers.

Children with Salmonella should:

- Drink plenty of fluids (i.e., water or juice).
- Stay away from other children until they are well.

If you are not getting better after 7 days or are feeling worse contact your health care provider.

If you are a food service worker, a health care worker, or a childcare worker: **report your illness to your supervisor and do not work until your illness is over** and your medical provider says it is okay to return to work.

What are the symptoms?

- Diarrhea (many loose bowel movements)
- Nausea and vomiting
- Stomach aches
- Fever
- Headache
- Abdominal cramps
- Dehydration (loss of fluids)

Symptoms usually appear 12-72 hours after exposure and last 5 to 7 days. Sometimes a person may be infected with salmonella but not feel sick. Some people have severe diarrhea and need to be hospitalized.

How is it prevented?

- Wash your hands and your children's hands after using the toilet, after changing diapers, before eating, before and after making food.
- Do not eat raw eggs or unpasteurized milk.
- Wash produce thoroughly before eating.
- Wash cutting boards and counters with hot soapy water after cutting raw or cooked meat on them.
- Poultry and meat, including hamburgers, should be well-cooked, not pink in the middle.
- Do **not** prepare foods for others if you have diarrhea or vomiting.
- Take special precautions with animals. Wash hands thoroughly after handling animals and pet foods, after cleaning animal enclosures and handling pet feces. Avoid giving pets raw foods of animal origin because they may transmit Salmonella to pets and people.
- Avoid direct, or even indirect, contact between reptiles and infants or immunocompromised persons.
- Mother's milk is the safest food for young infants. Breastfeeding can prevent Salmonella and many other health problems in infants.

This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider. For more information contact your health care provider or visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov.