



## SALMONELLA

### What is *Salmonella*?

*Salmonella* are bacteria that make people sick. They were first discovered by an American scientist named Dr. Daniel E. Salmon in 1885.

### Who gets *Salmonella*?

Any person can get salmonellosis, but it is identified more often in infants, children, and the elderly.

### How is *Salmonella* spread?

*Salmonella* bacteria are spread by direct contact with an infected person, by eating or drinking contaminated food or water, or by contact with contaminated object or animal.

A person can carry the bacteria from several days to many months. Infants and people who are treated with oral antibiotics tend to carry the bacteria longer than others.

### What are the symptoms of *Salmonella*?

Most people with *Salmonella* infection have diarrhea (loose stools), fever, and stomach cramps. Symptoms usually begin six hours to six days after infection and last four to seven days. However, some people do not develop symptoms for several weeks after infection and others experience symptoms for several weeks. *Salmonella* strains sometimes cause infection in urine, blood, bones, joints, or the nervous system (spinal fluid and brain) and can cause severe disease.

### How soon do symptoms appear?

Symptoms generally appear 12 to 36 hours after exposure but may take days to fully develop.

### Should an infected person be excluded from work or school?

Since *Salmonella* bacteria are in the feces (stools) of people with active diarrhea (loose stools) who are unable to control their bowel habits (e.g., infants, young children, and certain individuals with disabilities), they should be strictly supervised. Most infected people may return to work or school when their stools become formed as long as they carefully wash their hands after toilet visits.

People with diarrhea need to be excluded from daycare, food service, or any other group activity where they may present a risk to others. Most infected people return to work or school when their diarrhea stops if they carefully wash their hands after using the restroom. Food handlers, children and staff in daycare settings, and health care workers may return to work or school when they recover, as long as they carefully wash hands after toilet use.



# Frequently Asked Questions

Children in daycare and other sensitive situations should contact the Division of Public Health's Office of Infectious Disease Epidemiology at 1-888-295-5156 before returning to their routine activities. Food handlers may not return to work until three back-to-back negative stool samples are analyzed by a laboratory.

## **What is the treatment for *Salmonella*?**

Most people recover from *Salmonella* infection within four to seven days without antibiotics. People who are sick with a *Salmonella* infection should drink extra fluids as long as diarrhea lasts.

Antibiotic treatment is recommended for:

- people with severe illnesses
- people with a weakened immune system, such as from HIV infection or chemotherapy treatment
- adults older than 50 who have medical problems, such as heart disease
- infants (children younger than 12 months).
- adults aged 65 and older.

## **What can a person or community do to prevent the spread of *Salmonella*?**

- The single most important way to prevent the spread of disease is careful hand washing. Wash hands, kitchen work surfaces, and utensils with soap and water immediately after they have been in contact with raw meat or poultry, or raw eggs.
- Thoroughly cook all food derived from animal sources.
- Refrigerate foods promptly; do not hold at room temperature any longer than necessary.
- Wash cutting boards, utensils, and food preparation counters with soap and water immediately after use.
- Make sure that the correct internal cooking temperature is reached. The correct temperature is 160 degrees Fahrenheit for beef and pork, and 185 degrees Fahrenheit for poultry.
- Prevent cross contamination. Never let raw meat and poultry, or their juices, contact cooked meat or any other food, raw or cooked.

## **Resources**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <https://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/>

**Office of Infectious Disease Epidemiology**  
**24/7 Emergency Contact Number: 1-888-295-5156**