



SALMONELLOSIS

What is SALMONELLOSIS?

Salmonellosis is an infection caused by the bacterium *Salmonella* that usually affects the intestines and occasionally the bloodstream. It is one of the more common causes of gastroenteritis in the United States.

Who gets salmonellosis?

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

How are *Salmonella* bacteria spread?

Salmonella bacteria must be swallowed to cause illness. Therefore, it is spread by eating contaminated foods (e.g., beef, poultry, eggs, fruit, vegetables) that have not been cooked enough to kill the bacteria, or by drinking contaminated water or milk. Infected food handlers can spread the disease if they do not wash their hands with soap after using the bathroom, and then handling food. People can also become ill with *Salmonella* if they do not wash their hands well with soap after handling sick or seemingly well infected pets/animals (especially poultry, pigs, cows, rodents, and pets such as lizards, turtles, chicks, ducklings, dogs, and cats).

What are the symptoms of salmonellosis?

Symptoms can include diarrhea, cramping, fever, nausea, vomiting and headache. Some people may have very mild or no symptoms but some infections can be quite serious, especially in the very young or elderly. The symptoms may appear six hours to three days after exposure, but generally within 12-36 hours.

Where are *Salmonella* bacteria found?

Salmonella can contaminate raw meats (including chicken), eggs, and unpasteurized milk and cheese products. Other sources are the feces (stool) of infected persons or pets (e.g., reptiles, chicks and other fowl, dogs, cats, farm animals).

How long can an infected person carry *Salmonella*?

A person can carry the bacteria from several days to several weeks. Infants and people who have been treated with antibiotics tend to carry the bacteria longer than those that did not receive treatment.

What is the treatment for salmonellosis?

Antibiotics are usually not recommended for uncomplicated cases of *Salmonella*. Most people with salmonellosis recover on their own. Some people may require fluids to prevent dehydration.

How can salmonellosis be prevented?

- The single most important way to prevent the spread of disease is careful handwashing:
 - Before and after food preparation;
 - After using the toilet or changing diapers;
 - After handling domestic or wild animals, and pets such as reptiles, birds or baby chicks, dogs, cats and hamsters;
 - After contact with pet feces.
- Thoroughly cook all food derived from animal sources. Do not eat or drink food containing raw eggs or raw (unpasteurized) milk.
- Refrigerate foods promptly. Do not hold foods 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°F for beef and pork, and 180°F for poultry.
- Prevent cross contamination. Never let raw meat and poultry, or their juices, come in contact with cooked meat or any other food, raw or cooked.

24/7 Emergency Contact Number: 1-888-295-5156

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