

SALMONELLOSIS (SALMONELLA INFECTION) FACT SHEET

What is salmonella infection?

Salmonella infection is an infection of the intestines caused by bacteria called Salmonella. The bacteria can be found in foods like raw chicken, turkey, beef, pork, uncooked eggs and unpasteurized milk and cheese. The bacteria can also be found in pet animals like turtles, tortoises, iguanas, terrapins, chicks, cats and dogs.

What are the symptoms of salmonella infection?

- Stomach pain
- Diarrhea
- Fever
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea and/or vomiting

Symptoms can develop between 6 to 72 hours after exposure, but usually appear between 12 to 36 hours. Illness usually lasts from 4 to 7 days. Infection without symptoms is possible.

Who can get salmonella infection?

Anyone can get Salmonella infection. The illness can be worse in very young children, the elderly and in persons who are weak due to chronic disease.

How is salmonella infection spread?

You can pick up the Salmonella bacteria by eating raw or undercooked foods like poultry, beef, pork or eggs or by eating cooked foods that have been tainted with the bacteria either during handling of the food or during meal preparation. Person-to-person spread can happen if you handle items contaminated with the stool of an infected person and you do not wash your hands. You can also pick up the bacteria by handling pet animals such as turtles or iguanas or animals at the petting zoo and not washing your hands afterwards.

Is there treatment for salmonella infection?

Consult your health care provider regarding appropriate treatment for Salmonella infection. Antibiotics and other medications are usually not recommended unless your health care provider thinks you need them. Plenty of fluids, like pedialyte for infants and children and diluted sports drinks for older children and adults, may be recommended by your health care provider to replace fluids lost through diarrhea or vomiting. Follow your health care provider's instructions regarding when you need to be seen again if symptoms worsen.

Health care workers, child care workers, food handlers should not work when diarrhea is present. Please call Contra Costa Public Health at 925-313-6740 for specific recommendations.

How can salmonella infection be prevented?

- Wash hands before and after handling food, and before eating.
- Wash hands after handling pets and after touching items contaminated with stool.
- Wash fruits and vegetables before eating.
- Thoroughly cook poultry, meat, eggs, and fish before eating.
- Eat only pasteurized milk products; drink only pasteurized milk.
- Wash cutting boards and utensils after using them with raw food items. Sanitize your kitchen countertop. Add **1 tablespoon of bleach to 1 quart (4 cups) of water**, if an EPA-registered disinfectant is not available. This prevents contamination of cooked foods with drippings from raw foods.

For more information please contact Contra Costa Public Health at 925-313-6740 and visit our website at <http://cchealth.org/salmonella/> or <http://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/>