

SALMONELLOSIS (SALMONELLA INFECTION)

Reportable Disease

Outbreaks of *Salmonella* infections are unusual in child care and school settings, but can occur, especially in settings where children are in diapers, or have contact with reptiles.

CAUSE

Salmonella bacteria

SYMPTOMS

Diarrhea, cramps, nausea, fever, and sometimes vomiting. Infected persons may show mild symptoms or may not have any symptoms at all. Illness usually lasts 4 to 7 days.

SPREAD

Salmonella bacteria leave the body through the stool of an infected person and enter another person when hands, food, or objects (such as toys) contaminated with stool are placed in the mouth. Spread can occur when people do not wash their hands after using the toilet or changing diapers. Spread can also occur through contact with reptiles, farm animals, and infected pets (usually puppies, kittens, or chicks).

Most outbreaks of salmonellosis are associated with eating undercooked or raw food (eggs, poultry, meat), and contaminated fruits and vegetables.

INCUBATION (time from exposure to onset of symptoms)

6 to 72 hours, usually 12 to 36 hours

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD

As long as *Salmonella* is present in the stool, a person may pass the germs on to other people. *Salmonella* can be present in stool for several weeks after symptoms have resolved (median = 5 weeks).

EXCLUSION

Child care and School: Until 24 hours after diarrhea has stopped. Children who have *Salmonella* in their stools but who do not have symptoms do not need to be excluded.

Public Health may determine that for individual cases exclusion or restrictions are necessary. In these situations Public Health will provide guidance to the child care setting. Exclusion may be necessary during outbreaks.

Anyone with *Salmonella* infection should not use swimming beaches, pools, spas, water parks, hot tubs, or sharing baths with siblings until at least 2 weeks after diarrhea has stopped.

Staff with *Salmonella* may be restricted from working in food service. Contact Communicable Disease Programs at (925) 313-6740 for more information.

DIAGNOSIS

Recommend parents/guardians call their healthcare provider if their child has symptoms of salmonellosis. There is a lab test to detect *Salmonella* in the stool.

TREATMENT

Antibiotic treatment is not usually given. Diarrhea and vomiting may lead to dehydration, which can be a medical emergency.

PREVENTION/CONTROL

- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm running water after using the toilet and changing diapers and before preparing or eating food. Staff should closely monitor handwashing of all children after children have used the bathroom or have been diapered.
- Chicks, ducklings, reptiles (e.g., pet turtles, iguanas, snakes), and amphibians are potential sources of *Salmonella* for small children and are not recommended for child care settings. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm running water immediately after handling these pets.
- Clean and disinfect diapering area and potty chairs after each use and bathroom toilets, sinks, and toys at least daily and when soiled.
- Clean and sanitize mouthed toys, objects, and surfaces at least daily, and when soiled.

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/>