



Salmonella

Facts about salmonella

Salmonella is a bacteria that can cause illness, especially diarrhea. About 30,000 cases of salmonella infection are reported in the U.S. every year. Thousands of cases are not reported.

Some important things to know about salmonella infection are:

- This illness is more common in the summer than winter.
- Symptoms include fever, abdominal cramps and diarrhea that begin 8 to 72 hours after a person is infected. Symptoms usually last for 5 to 7 days.
- A laboratory test of the feces (bowel movements or stool) is the best way to diagnose salmonella infection. (Other germs can cause the same symptoms.)
- Sometimes severe diarrhea can lead to hospitalization. People who have severe diarrhea for more than a day or two should go to a doctor or clinic.
- Rarely, the infection may spread from the intestines to the blood stream, and then to other parts of the body. The person will need medical care to prevent serious illness or even death. Infants, elderly people and people with weak immune systems are more likely to develop a severe illness from salmonella.



The spread of salmonella

Salmonella can be spread by the following:

- **undercooked poultry and eggs, unpasteurized milk**
- **feces of infected people** who do not wash their hands properly, or if diapers are not changed carefully.
- **raw meat** (even though the animals are healthy before slaughtering)
- **unwashed, uncooked vegetables and fruits**
- **intestines and feces of pets**
- **reptiles, such as turtles and lizards**



Treatment for diarrhea caused by salmonella

Diarrhea caused by salmonella usually goes away in 5 to 7 days without treatment.

There is no vaccine to prevent salmonella.

Antibiotics are not necessary for most people. Antibiotics are often given to people who are at risk of developing serious complications, including infants, the elderly and those with weak immune systems.

If young children and babies have diarrhea and fever for more than a day, call your doctor or clinic.

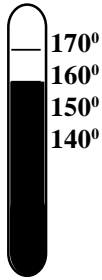
Other treatment

- Do not use medicine to stop the diarrhea. It is better to allow the germs to travel through the body and leave the body in the feces.
- Eat light foods and liquids, such as gelatins, 7-Up® and Gatorade.®
- People who have severe diarrhea need large amounts of fluids. Sometimes intravenous (IV) fluids are required from a hospital.



Do not prepare or serve food if you have salmonella.
Do not go to work in a food service job if you have salmonella.

How to protect yourself and your family from salmonella



Food — cooking food completely kills the salmonella germ.

- Cook foods completely. If possible, use a meat thermometer for large pieces of meat, such as turkeys and roasts. Do not eat meat that is pink in the middle.

- Thoroughly wash all fruits and vegetables, including melons.

- Keep uncooked meats and their raw juices away from cooked meats. Do not use the same dishes when barbecuing meat. Put cooked hot dogs and hamburgers in a clean serving dish.



- Thoroughly wash utensils, cutting boards, work surfaces and hands after working with raw meat and eggs.

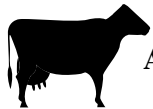
- Put all cooked foods into the refrigerator within an hour after cooking. Put large quantities in smaller containers to cool quickly.

- Salmonella has been found inside intact eggs. Do not eat raw eggs.

- Watch for raw eggs hidden in foods such as: cookie dough, frostings, taramatsu, homemade ice cream, salad dressings, or mayonnaise.

- Always refrigerate raw eggs. Do not use cracked eggs.

- Ask your supermarket for pasteurized egg products if you need uncooked eggs for a certain recipe.



Animal Care



- Wash hands carefully with soap and warm water after cleaning up animal feces or handling animals.
- Wash hands carefully with soap and warm water after handling reptiles, even if you touch only the shells. Teach children to do the same.

How to wash hands well



Rub both hands on the top and bottom with soap for 20 seconds.



Use paper towels or clean terry cloth towels for drying.



Use the paper towel to turn off the water faucet in a public place.

Wash hands carefully after bowel movements or changing diapers. Clean toilet with disinfectant. Clean toilet handle and faucets. Keep towels clean.

Salmonella infection is a reportable illness

If you are diagnosed with salmonella infection, your doctor will give a report to the County Health and Human Services Agency. You may be contacted to find out how you got infected. This helps prevent the illness from spreading to others.

For more information about this illness, see the website for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.CDC.gov.

To report salmonella in San Diego County, call (619) 515-6620.

