



Salmonella

What is *Salmonella*?

Salmonella is a type a germ (bacteria) that can cause an intestinal (bowel) illness in humans and animals called salmonellosis. *Salmonella* can spread from the intestines to the blood stream, and then to other parts of the body. Everyone needs to protect themselves against *Salmonella*, but the risk of salmonellosis is greatest for young children, the elderly, pregnant women, and anyone with a weakened immune system.

How does *Salmonella* spread?

People usually get *Salmonella* by eating contaminated food that was raw or not cooked properly or by drinking contaminated beverages. Foods that can cause *Salmonella* include chicken, eggs, other meats, fresh vegetables, sprouted seeds, milk, and peanut butter, but other foods can also spread *Salmonella*. Contaminated foods usually look and smell normal. Thorough cooking kills this bacteria and good hand washing helps stop the spread of *Salmonella*.

People may also get sick from contact with animals (pet chickens, dogs, and cats) and reptiles (turtles and iguanas) that carry *Salmonella*.

What are the symptoms of salmonellosis?

Symptoms usually begin 12 to 72 hours after the germs are swallowed. Symptoms include stomach cramps, diarrhea, and fever, usually lasting 4-7 days.

How do you know if you have salmonellosis?

Your healthcare provider can send a stool (feces) sample to a laboratory. The laboratory will test the sample for *Salmonella* bacteria.

How is salmonellosis treated?

Most people recover on their own or only require fluids to prevent dehydration. Antibiotics may be used to treat salmonella infection in people who cannot fight off the illness on their own.

How can I prevent *Salmonella*?

When preparing food that must be cooked before eating like eggs, chicken, and other meats handle them as if they are contaminated. Remember to always practice good hand washing.

Chill!

- Refrigerate leftovers and unused portions promptly.
- Food should not be left out for more than 2 hours. If out on a hot summer day, do not leave food out for more than 1 hour.
- Keep your cooler full to maintain cold temperatures, keep it out of the sun and limit the number of times you open it.

CONTINUED

Clean!

- Wash your hands with warm soapy water for at least 20 seconds (or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer):
 - Before, during, and after preparing food (especially after touching raw food)
 - Before eating food
 - After using the toilet
 - After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
 - After touching an animal or animal waste
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Rinse all fresh fruits and vegetables under running water before cooking, packing or eating.
- Wash all surfaces and utensils with warm, soapy water before and after use.

Separate!

- Keep juices from raw meat, poultry, or fish from coming in contact with other foods, cooked or raw. These juices contain germs!
- Use separate plates for raw and cooked meat, fish, or poultry (do not put cooked or ready-to-eat food on the same plate used for raw foods).
- Use one dedicated cutting board for meat or poultry and one dedicated cutting board for ready-to-eat food.
- Do not reuse utensils that have touched raw foods unless you wash them with soap and water.

Cook!

- Thaw food in the refrigerator or microwave, not on the counter.
- Check expiration dates of meats, chicken, fish, shellfish, milk and other products.
- Use a food thermometer to make sure food is at a safe internal temperature.
- Ground meat (such as hamburger) should be cooked to 160°F and fresh beef, veal, or lamb steaks to 145°F with a 3 minutes rest period (after removing your meat from the heat source, let it sit for 3 minutes. Your meat will continue to cook during this time, helping to kill any remaining germs). Chicken should reach a temperature of 165°F and fish should cook to 145°F or until it is opaque and separates easily. Shellfish should be closed tightly before cooking and cooked until their shells open. Cook eggs until yolks and whites are firm, do not eat “runny” eggs.
- Do not interrupt cooking by partially cooking food and then finishing later.
- If you are served undercooked food in a restaurant, send it back for further cooking.
- Do not use unpasteurized milk or other dairy products (such as cheese).
- When serving, keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold.

What if I have *Salmonella*?

Most infected people may return to work or school once their diarrhea has resolved, provided they carefully wash their hands after using the bathroom. Keep in mind it is possible to give the bacteria to other's even after feeling better. In order to protect the public, workers in Boston who handle food and health care workers must be cleared by the Boston Public health Commission before returning to work.

