



Mecklenburg County Health Department

Salmonellosis

Salmonellosis is a symptomatic infection caused by bacteria of the *Salmonella* type. The most common symptoms are diarrhea, fever, abdominal cramps, and vomiting. Symptoms typically occur between 12 hours and 36 hours after exposure, and last from 2 to 7 days. Occasionally more significant disease can result in dehydration. The old, young, and others with a weakened immune system are more likely to develop severe disease. Specific types of *Salmonella* can result in typhoid fever or paratyphoid fever.

Salmonella enters the body through the mouth. Children can catch this infection by putting contaminated objects, such as toys or fingers in their mouths or by eating or drinking contaminated food or water. Children can catch this infection by putting toys in their mouth or by sucking on their fingers. Outbreaks can occur in daycare rooms with diapered children. Almost all persons recover without antibiotic treatment. Some people become carriers and remain contagious for weeks to months.

- **You can get a *Salmonella* infection from** a variety of foods. *Salmonella* can be found in many foods, including sprouts and other vegetables, eggs, chicken, pork, fruits, and even processed foods, such as nut butters, frozen pot pies, chicken nuggets, and stuffed chicken entrees. Contaminated foods usually look and smell normal, which is why it is important to know how to prevent infection.
- ***Salmonella* also can spread from animals to people and from people to people.** Always **wash your hands** after contact with animals. Also wash your hands after using the toilet, changing diapers, or helping someone with diarrhea clean up after using the toilet. If you have a *Salmonella* infection, you should not prepare food or drinks for others until you no longer have diarrhea.
- ***Salmonella* illness is more common in the summer.** Warmer weather and unrefrigerated foods create ideal conditions for *Salmonella* to grow. Be sure to refrigerate or freeze perishables (foods likely to spoil or go bad quickly), prepared foods, and leftovers within 2 hours (or 1 hour if the temperature outside is 90°F or hotter).
- ***Salmonella* illness can be serious and is more dangerous for certain people.** Anyone can get a *Salmonella* infection, but some people are more likely to develop a serious illness, including children younger than 5, older adults, and people with immune systems weakened from a medical condition, such as diabetes, liver or kidney disease, and cancer or its treatment.
- ***Salmonella* causes far more illnesses than you might suspect.** For every person with a *Salmonella* illness confirmed by a laboratory test, there are about 30 more people with *Salmonella* illnesses that are *not* reported. Most people who get food poisoning do not go to a doctor or submit a sample to a laboratory, so we never learn what germ made them sick.

For more information regarding guidance and prevention visit the following link
<https://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/index.html>

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