

FACT SHEET

Salmonella

What is *Salmonella*?

Salmonella are bacteria that make people ill. The illness they cause is called salmonellosis and usually includes fever, diarrhea, and abdominal cramping.

How is it spread?

There are multiple ways to get infected with *Salmonella*. Most types of *Salmonella* live in the intestinal tracts of animals and birds and are passed to humans by contaminated foods, such as beef, poultry, milk, or eggs. *Salmonella* bacteria is also shed in the feces of infected individuals and can spread to others via contaminated hands to food during preparation. *Salmonella* may also be found in the feces of some pets and people can become infected if they do not wash their hands after contact.

An infected person is contagious to others while they are actively ill until 2-3 days after their symptoms have resolved.

What are the symptoms?

- Diarrhea (can be bloody)
- Fever
- Stomach cramps
- Headaches
- Nausea and vomiting

Symptoms usually begin 6-72 hours after exposure. The illness usually last 4-7 days.

How is it prevented?

- Wash your hands after using the bathroom, after changing diapers, before eating, before and after making food, and after playing with animals.
- Practice safe food handling and preparation.
- Do not eat raw eggs or unpasteurized milk.
- Throw away cracked eggs.
- Cook meat well before eating it.
- Clean cutting boards, countertops, and utensils thoroughly after contact with raw or cooked meat, poultry, or eggs.

How is it treated?

Salmonellosis usually resolves on its own. Medication is usually not needed but is given in certain situations. If you are a food-handler, or work at or attend a day care, you may need to be excluded until symptoms are gone and a stool culture is normal.

This fact sheet is for informational purposes only and is not intended for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider. For more information contact your health care provider or visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov.