

Salmonella

What is Salmonellosis?

Salmonellosis is an infection with a bacterium called Salmonella.

What are the symptoms of Salmonella?

Most people with Salmonella infection have diarrhea, fever, and stomach cramps. Symptoms usually begin six hours to six days after infection and last four to seven days. However, some people do not develop symptoms for several weeks after infection and others experience symptoms for several weeks. Salmonella strains sometimes cause infection in urine, blood, bones, joints, or the nervous system (spinal fluid and brain) and can cause severe disease.

How is a Salmonella infection diagnosed?

Salmonella infection is diagnosed when a laboratory test detects Salmonella bacteria in a person's stool (poop), body tissue, or fluids.

How is a Salmonella infection treated?

Most people recover from Salmonella infection within four to seven days without antibiotics. People who are sick with a Salmonella infection should drink extra fluids as long as diarrhea lasts.

Antibiotic treatment is recommended for:

- People with severe illness
- People with a weakened immune system, such as from HIV infection or chemotherapy treatment
- Adults older than 50 who have medical problems, such as heart disease
- Infants (children younger than 12 months).
- Adults age 65 or older

Can Salmonella cause long-term health problems?

Most people with diarrhea caused by Salmonella recover completely, although some people's bowel habits (frequency and consistency of poop) may not return to normal for a few months.

Some people with Salmonella infection develop pain in their joints, called reactive arthritis, after the infection has ended. Reactive arthritis can last for months or years and can be difficult to treat. Some people with reactive arthritis develop irritation of the eyes and pain when urinating.

How do people get infected?

Salmonella live in the intestines of people and animals. People can get Salmonella infection from a variety of sources, including:

- Eating contaminated food or drinking contaminated water
- Touching infected animals, their feces, or their environment

How can Salmonella be prevented?

Take a look at the CDC's tips for lowering your chance of getting Salmonella:

1. **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.
2. **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.
3. **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).
4. **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.
5. **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.



Can I get Salmonella from my pets?

Yes. Pets and other healthy animals, including those at petting zoos, farms, fairs, and even schools and daycares, can carry Salmonella and other germs that make people sick. The following tips will help you stay safe when it comes to our feathery, furry, and scaly friends.

- Wash your hands thoroughly with running water and soap after touching pets and other animals, or their food, water, poop, belongings (such as toys and bowls), or habitats (such as beds, cages, tanks, coops, stalls, and barns).
- Don't put your hands in your mouth after petting or playing with animals. Keep other items that have come into contact with animals out of your mouth.
- Don't kiss cats, dogs, chickens, turtles, lizards, or other pets or animals.
- Don't let children younger than age 5, people with weakened immune systems, or older adults touch high-risk animals (like turtles, frogs, chickens, or ducks) or their belongings or habitats.
- Never eat or drink around high-risk animals or in areas where they live and roam.

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- Clean your pet's bed, cage, terrarium, or aquarium and its contents (such as food and water bowls) outdoors. If you must clean your pet's habitat indoors, use a bathtub or large sink that can be cleaned and disinfected. Avoid using a kitchen sink, if possible.
- Take your pet to the veterinarian regularly. By keeping your pet healthy, you also help to keep yourself and your family healthy.

For more information:

Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at <https://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/> or call Huron County Public Health at: 419-668-1652 ext. 269.