



For Staff /Patient Education

Salmonella

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What is it?

- [Salmonella](#) is a genus of rod-shaped, Gram-negative, non-spore-forming, predominantly motile enterobacteria with diameters around 0.8 to 1.5 μm , lengths from 2 to 5 μm , and peritrichous flagella, (flagella that are all around the cell body).
- *Salmonella* is found worldwide in both cold-blooded and warm-blooded animals, and in the environment. They cause illnesses such as [typhoid fever](#), [paratyphoid fever](#), and [food poisoning](#).
- [Salmonellosis](#) is an infection caused by bacteria called *Salmonella*.
- Most people infected with *Salmonella* develop fever, diarrhea, and abdominal cramps 12 - 72 hours after exposure. Although illness usually lasts 4 - 7 days and most people recover without treatment, severe illness may occur that requires medical attention and hospitalization. In these patients, the *Salmonella* infection can spread from the intestines to the bloodstream and then to other body sites. In this situation, the infection can cause death unless the patient is treated promptly with antibiotics.
- Infants, elderly people, and people with impaired immune systems are more likely than other people to become severely ill.

How is it spread?

- [Contaminated food, water, or contact with infected animals.](#)
- *Salmonella* usually are transmitted to humans by eating food contaminated with animal feces. Contaminated foods usually look and smell normal and are often of animal origin, such as poultry, eggs, pork, and raw milk. However, contaminated fruits and vegetables also cause many illnesses.

Where is it found?

- *Salmonella* bacteria live in the intestinal tracts of many animals, including food animals such as cattle and poultry, wild animals, and pets.

Prevention & Control:

- Cook poultry, ground beef, and eggs thoroughly. Do not eat or drink foods containing raw eggs, or raw (unpasteurized) milk.
- If you are served undercooked meat, poultry or eggs in a restaurant, don't hesitate to send it back to the kitchen for further cooking.
- Wash hands, kitchen work surfaces, and utensils with soap and water immediately after they have been in contact with raw meat or poultry.
- Be particularly careful with foods prepared for infants, the elderly, and the immunocompromised.
- Wash hands with soap after handling reptiles, birds, or baby chicks, and after contact with pet feces.
- Avoid direct or even indirect contact between reptiles (turtles, iguanas, other lizards, snakes) and infants or immunocompromised persons.
- Don't work with raw poultry or meat, and an infant (e.g., feed, change diaper) at the same time.
- Mother's milk is the safest food for young infants. Breastfeeding prevents salmonellosis and many other health problems.
- People who have salmonellosis should not prepare food or pour water for others until their diarrhea has resolved.



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Source:

CDC- Prevention- Salmonella
(<http://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/general/prevention.html>)



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Concept adapted from Public Health Ontario-Regional Infection Control Network