

Fact Sheet: Salmonellosis

What is Salmonellosis?

Salmonellosis is a disease caused by a group of bacteria called Salmonella, that get into the intestines. Salmonella is usually found in contaminated foods of animal origin, such as beef, poultry, unpasteurized milk, or raw eggs. However, all foods, including fruits and vegetables, can become contaminated with Salmonella.

What are the symptoms?

- Diarrhea (many loose bowel movements)
- Dehydration (loss of fluids)
- Nausea and vomiting
- Stomach aches
- Fever
- Headache

Symptoms usually appear 12-36 hours after exposure.

Sometimes a person may be infected with salmonella but not feel sick.

How is it spread?

People get Salmonella from eating contaminated food, from handling raw meats, or from infected people who do not wash their hands after using the toilet. Salmonella is also found in pets, including turtles, iguanas, chicks, dogs and cats.

This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used for self -diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider. For more information call your health care provider or call Washtenaw County Public Health at 734-544-6700.

How is it treated?

If you have Salmonella you should:

- Drink plenty of fluids (such as water or juice).
- Not prepare food.
- Wash your hands after using the bathroom or changing diapers.
- After each bowel movement, clean the bathroom, including the toilet flushing handle, water faucets and doorknobs, with 1 part bleach in 10 parts water (make a fresh solution everyday).

Children with Salmonella should:

- Drink plenty of fluids (i.e., water or juice).
- Stay away from other children until they are well.

If you are a food service worker, a health care worker, or a childcare worker: report your illness to your supervisor and do not work until your illness is over and your medical provider says it is OK to return to work.

How is it prevented?

- Wash your hands and your children's hands after using the toilet, after changing diapers, before eating, before and after making food, and after playing with animals.
- Do not eat raw eggs or unpasteurized milk.
- Cook meat well before eating it. Put leftover cooked food in the refrigerator right after a meal.
- Wash cutting boards and counters with hot soapy water after cutting raw or cooked meat on them.
- Wash children's toys, the floors they crawl on and surfaces they touch with a bleach solution (1 part bleach to 10 parts water). Make the solution fresh everyday. Rinse washed toys and surfaces in clean hot water.
- Mother's milk is the safest food for young infants. Breast-feeding prevents Salmonella and many other health problems in infants.

