



Salmonella

What is Salmonella?

Salmonella bacteria cause food poisoning. Symptoms include diarrhoea, stomach cramps and sometimes vomiting and fever. Most people recover without treatment, but if you become seriously ill you may need hospital care because the dehydration (fluid loss) caused by the illness can be life-threatening.

What are the symptoms?

The most common symptoms are:

- diarrhoea
- stomach cramps
- fever

The illness normally lasts between one and seven days.

Who is at risk?

Anyone can get salmonella, but young children, the elderly and those in poor health may become ill.

Where does Salmonella come from?

You find Salmonella bacteria in the gut of many wild and domestic animals including poultry, cattle, rodents and pets such as cats and dogs. Humans can also be a source of infection, especially if they have been ill with Salmonella or are recovering from the illness.

How is Salmonella spread?

Salmonella is spread by eating contaminated food that is undercooked or raw such as poultry, eggs, meat and meat products and untreated milk and dairy products. It can also be spread by an infected person, for example, through inadequate hand washing

after using the bathroom and/or during food handling. Contact with animals can also spread Salmonella.

What is the treatment for Salmonella?

Most people recover on their own. However, small children, the elderly, and others with severe diarrhoea should see a doctor.

How can you avoid getting infected with Salmonella?

Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water:

- before preparing and eating food
- after handling raw food
- after going to the toilet or changing a baby's nappy
- after contact with pets and other animals, especially reptiles and amphibians
- after working in the garden

and

- Keep cooked food away from raw food.
- Store raw foods below cooked or ready-to-eat foods in the fridge to prevent contamination.
- Wash raw fruits and vegetables thoroughly before eating.
- Cook food thoroughly, especially meat, poultry and eggs, so that it is piping hot. They should not be eaten raw or undercooked.
- Keep all kitchen surfaces and equipment including knives, chopping boards and dish cloths clean.