



Sedgwick County...
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Division of Health

FACTS & details

about Sedgwick County Government

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***Salmonella* infection (Salmonellosis)**

What is *Salmonella*?

Salmonella is a bacterium that causes diarrhea and other "stomach bug" symptoms. Salmonellosis is the infection the bacteria causes.

How common is salmonellosis?

Salmonellosis is a common cause of diarrhea. The CDC estimates about 1 million cases occur in the United States each year.

How do people become infected?

Salmonellosis is spread by eating undercooked meat, raw vegetables, sprouts, and fruits that have been grown or washed in contaminated water; swimming in or drinking sewage contaminated water; exposure to infected animals; and eating food prepared by people who have not washed their hands after using the toilet. People can get *Salmonella* from pet turtles, iguanas, lizards, snakes, ducklings, and chicks.

What are the signs and symptoms of salmonellosis?

Symptoms include diarrhea, fever, and stomach cramps. Dehydration (loss of fluids) can occur and may be severe in infected infants or elderly people.

How long can you spread *Salmonella*?

After exposure, symptoms appear in 12 to 72 hours and last about five to 10 days. Someone with salmonellosis is contagious as long as *Salmonella* is found in their feces (poop).

How is salmonellosis treated?

Salmonella infections do not usually require treatment other than oral fluids, unless the patient becomes severely dehydrated or the infection spreads from the gut. Antibiotic therapy can prolong the duration of *Salmonella* bacteria in the feces (poop) and is recommended only for patients with severe illness or those at risk of severe disease and complications.

Who is at risk for severe disease?

Anyone can become infected with *Salmonella*, but infants, people with weakened immune systems, and the elderly are most at risk for severe disease.

How can you prevent salmonellosis?

There is no vaccine for *Salmonella*. Prevent infection by the following methods:

- Wash your hands after using the toilet, changing diapers, and preparing or eating food.
- Wash your hands after contact with animals or their environments. Consider keeping children away from reptiles, birds, and baby chicks.
- Cook poultry, ground beef, and eggs thoroughly.
- Avoid raw milk and unpasteurized dairy products.
- Avoid swallowing water when swimming or playing in natural waterways or swimming pools.
- Prevent cross contamination in food preparation areas by washing your hands and surfaces after they touch raw meat.
- Wash produce thoroughly.
- People who have salmonellosis should not prepare food or drinks for others until symptoms resolve.

For More Information:

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