

* If you work at a job in which you handle food or work around small children or provide patient care, you must submit samples which show NO salmonella germs before you may return to work. (You may be entitled to State Disability if you are required to stay off work).

SALMONELLA

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WHAT IS SALMONELLA?

Salmonella infections are caused by bacteria that are common in our environment.

HOW IS THE DISEASE SPREAD?

Salmonella is often present in raw meat, fish and dairy products. Infection may result if these foods are not properly cooked or handled. Salmonella is also passed from person to person. Spread often occurs by contaminated hand-to-mouth contact or by hand-to-food-to-mouth contact.

Salmonella has also been found in fresh produce. It is important to wash or peel fresh fruit and vegetables.

Pet turtles, snakes and lizards are also carriers of salmonella bacteria. Wash your hands with soap and water immediately after handling.

SYMPTOMS

Salmonella may cause a local infection in the intestines. The following symptoms may occur: nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, diarrhea, and fever. Symptoms usually begin in 12-48 hours after the person is infected.

Symptoms may be mild to severe. Death is uncommon, although the infection could be fatal to chronically ill persons, the elderly, or infants. Mild salmonella infections usually require no medicine. However, if symptoms persist, a physician may order medicine to control symptoms.

CARRIERS

A small percentage of people remain carriers of the bacteria even though they do not have symptoms. These people still have salmonella bacteria in their stool and/or urine. Carriers may spread the disease to others if they are careless about personal hygiene.

SALMONELLA IS CONTAGIOUS

Since salmonella disease is contagious, it is reported to the health department. After the health department is notified, a public health representative will usually contact you. You will be asked about your illness (when you became ill, how long you've been ill, etc.). You may also be asked for one or more stool samples. *

CONTROL THE SPREAD

1) WASH YOUR HANDS THOROUGHLY

- a) Before handling any food
- b) After using the rest room.
- c) After handling uncooked meats (this reduces the chance of contaminating ready-to-eat foods or utensils).

2) Carefully follow label directions for storing, preparing, or serving frozen foods. Storage at proper temperatures prevents salmonella growth and thorough cooking will kill the bacteria..

3) Do not thaw uncooked frozen poultry at room temperature. Thaw it in the refrigerator.

4) Cook all poultry thoroughly and refrigerate leftovers promptly and heat them thoroughly before re-serving. Gravies should be reheated to a rolling boil.

5) Before re-using, thoroughly wash utensils, cutting boards used for preparing raw poultry, meats, fish, eggs or pastry mixes.

6) Avoid tasting uncooked food mixtures containing raw eggs, poultry, meat, or fish (especially unbaked cake batter).

7) On picnics make sure that hot foods are kept hot and cold foods are kept cold until eaten