



# Communicable Disease: *SALMONELLOSIS*



## What Is Salmonellosis?

Salmonellosis is an infection caused by *Salmonella* bacteria. These bacteria grow in the small intestine, invading the gut lining to cause illness.

## Who can get Salmonellosis?

Anyone can get *Salmonella*.

People who are most likely to get a severe infection include the elderly, infants and those with weak immune systems.

## What are the symptoms?

Symptoms may include:

- Vomiting
- Nausea
- Cramps
- Fever
- Chills
- Headache

It is possible for infected people to be asymptomatic- show no signs of symptoms.

### Quick Facts:

- Bacterial infection causing diarrhea in humans and animals
- Found in raw milk, raw eggs and undercooked meats/poultry
- Good personal hygiene is the best prevention

## How long can I be ill?

Symptoms usually appear 6 to 72 hours after swallowing the bacteria, although 12-36 hours is the most common. The illness can last from several days to several weeks. Most people are ill for 4-7 days and recover without treatment. Those affected should drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration.

## Are there complications?

Some strains of *Salmonella* can cause typhoid fever. In rare cases people may develop Reiter's Syndrome, a condition that includes: joint pain, eye irritation or painful urination.

## Where can it be found?

*Salmonella* is commonly found in the intestine of animals and birds. It is usually transmitted to humans by eating foods contaminated by animal feces. Contaminated foods usually look and smell normal.

Pets such as turtles, snakes and other reptiles can carry *Salmonella* in their stool or on their bodies even when they appear healthy. People can become infected if they do not wash their hands after contact with any animals.

## How is it transmitted?

*Salmonella* is spread when people ingest unpasteurized milk, raw eggs, unwashed fruits or vegetables or undercooked meats/poultry.

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Those infected can also be a source by transmitting the bacteria from person to person or person to object through unwashed hands. Asymptomatic carriers can also spread the illness

## How Can I Prevent Salmonellosis?

- Thorough hand washing is the best prevention. Make sure hands are properly washed after using the toilet, changing diapers, handling animals or before preparing foods
- Clean and sanitize counter tops and utensils after contact with raw meats and poultry
- Wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly before eating
- Cook meat, poultry to 74°C. Cook egg products thoroughly. Cook stuffing separately
- Drink only pasteurized milk. Never let children sample raw milk directly from the animal
- Avoid using raw eggs as in homemade egg-nogs and never use dirty or cracked eggs
- Keep cold foods at 4°C or lower. Keep hot foods at 60°C or higher
- Drink water from a safe supply. Have your well water tested to ensure it is safe to drink
- If you have diarrhea, avoid preparing or handling food
- Turtles, chicks, ducks, and exotic pets (iguanas, salamanders, hedgehogs), may carry *Salmonella*. These are not suitable pets for small children.

## See your doctor if you have diarrhea or a possible foodborne illness

Food handlers, health care workers, child care workers, children in child care, or anyone in the family of such people who has salmonellosis, should contact their local health authority to get specific recommendations.

For more information contact your doctor, Public Health Inspector or Public Health Services:

Moose Jaw office - (306) 691-1500  
Central Butte office - (306) 796-2130  
Assiniboia office - (306) 642-2200  
Gravelbourg office - (306) 648-1400  
Health Line - 1-877-800-0002