



Protecting Your Family from *Salmonella*

INFORMATION FROM THE BOARD OF ANIMAL HEALTH AND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

What is Salmonella

Salmonella is a bacteria that is carried in the intestines of animals and can be shed into the environment. People can become infected after eating contaminated foods or from contact with animals or their environments. Chicks, ducklings, and other poultry are a recognized source of *Salmonella*, especially for children.

How do people get *Salmonella* from handling poultry?

People get sick from *Salmonella* by hand to mouth contact. Usually this happens when people handle birds or their droppings and then touch their mouths or forget to wash their hands before eating or drinking. Birds that do not look sick may be shedding *Salmonella*. Even though a bird looks clean, it may still have germs on its feathers or feet.

What are symptoms?

Salmonella can cause diarrhea, vomiting, and fever. Occasionally people become sick enough to need a doctor or be hospitalized. Most people develop symptoms 1 to 3 days after being exposed to *Salmonella* and recover in about a week.

Some people are more susceptible to infection and can have more severe disease. These people include young children, people who are pregnant, the elderly, people on chemotherapy, people with diabetes, and others with weakened immune systems.

How can *Salmonella* infection be prevented?

Whether you raise chicks or ducklings as a source of food or keep them as pets, follow these steps to protect yourself and your family from illness:

- Wash your hands thoroughly after handling poultry, their habitat or droppings.
- Use coop-dedicated clothing/coveralls and shoes. Remove or change them before re-entering your house.
- Children less than five years of age are at higher risk of *Salmonella* infections and should not handle poultry.
- Do not eat or drink around poultry or their living areas.
- Do not let poultry live inside your home.
- Do not wash equipment and materials used for raising poultry in the kitchen sink

For more information go to [CDC: Backyard Poultry\(cdc.gov/healthy-pets/about/backyard-poultry.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/healthy-pets/about/backyard-poultry.html).

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