



# Protecting Your Family from *Salmonella*

## What is *Salmonella*?

*Salmonella* is a type of bacteria that is carried in the intestines of animals and can be shed into the environment. People typically 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*, children are especially at risk.

## 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 accidentally touch their mouths or forget to wash their hands before eating or drinking. Even birds that do not look sick may be shedding *Salmonella*. And even though a bird looks clean, it may still have germs like *Salmonella* on its feathers or feet.

## What kind of illness is caused by *Salmonella* in people?

*Salmonella* can cause diarrhea, vomiting, and fever. Occasionally people become sick enough to need to see 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 will have more severe disease. These people include young children, pregnant women, the elderly, people on chemotherapy, diabetics, 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:

- Do not let children less than five years of age or others at high risk handle poultry or items contaminated by poultry.
- Wash your hands thoroughly after handling poultry or their droppings.
- Do not eat or drink around poultry or their living areas.
- Do not let poultry live inside your home.
- Do not wash the birds' food and water dishes in the kitchen sink.

For more information go to: [www.cdc.gov/healthypets/pdf/intown\\_flocks.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/pdf/intown_flocks.pdf)



For questions related to *Salmonella*, contact the IDPH Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology at 800-362-2736



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