

Salmonella and Salmonellosis

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Salmonella

Salmonella is a harmful bacteria that can cause foodborne illness called salmonellosis.

According to FDA reports this pathogen tops the list in domestically acquired foodborne illness resulting in hospitalization and death.

Occurrence of Salmonella

Salmonella is normally present in the intestinal tract of animals, particularly in poultry and swine, other sources of the organism include water, soil, insects, factory surfaces, kitchen surfaces, animal feces, raw meats, raw poultry, and raw seafoods.

How can someone get infected with Salmonella?

- Consuming food and water contaminated with animal faeces.

NOTE: (Though *Salmonella* is normally associated with foods of animal origin (beef, poultry, milk, fish or eggs), vegetables, fruits, and processed food could also become contaminated with *Salmonella*.)

- Poor hygiene practices, for example, not washing hands

Symptoms of Salmonella infection or Salmonellosis:

- A person infected with *Salmonella* normally has fever
- Abdominal cramps and sudden onset of diarrhea (which may be bloody) will occur with 12-72 hours after contamination of contaminated food.
- Nausea, vomiting, and headache could occur, but are less frequent

Who is At Risk?

Though anyone is susceptible to *Salmonella* infection, **children are at the highest risk followed by people with weak immune system such as the elderly, pregnant women, neonates, and adults with weak immune system (referred to as immunocompromised) are at a higher risk and are highly likely to have severe infection.**

Some Relevant Food Safety Tips:

- Avoid eating any product that has been recalled from the market.
- Contact your health care provider if you have eaten or come in contact with the recalled food item.
- Thoroughly wash the surface areas of fruits and vegetables that are consumed raw.
- By normal practice people tend to cut away damaged parts on fresh fruits and vegetables before preparing and/or eating, but at times like this it is better to discard damaged or bruised fresh fruits and vegetables.
- To avoid cross contamination, fruits and vegetables that will be eaten raw must be kept separate from other foods such as raw meat, poultry or seafood
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water after handling raw meat or poultry.
- All utensils and your work surfaces in the kitchen should be washed with soap and water periodically and especially after they have been in contact with raw meat or poultry.
- Thoroughly wash, scrub, and rinse non-porous or plastic cutting boards with dish washing liquid or using your dish washer.

References:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

- <http://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/index.html>

Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Bad bug book

- <http://www.fda.gov/food/foodborneillnesscontaminants/causesofillnessbadbugbook/cm069966.htm>