

# Salmonella Fact Sheet

## What is Salmonella?

Salmonellosis is a bacterial disease. Salmonella bacteria can cause diseases for both man and animals. Salmonella Enteritidis and Salmonella Typhimurium are the two most common types in this country.

If you have Salmonella you may be experiencing the following symptoms:

- Headache
- Abdominal pain
- Diarrhoea
- Nausea and sometimes vomiting
- Fever

Rarely, the Enterocolitis may develop into Septicaemia, producing abscesses, causing arthritis and other infections.

Symptoms usually last for days but carriers' status can persist for months.

## Where is Salmonella found?

Domestic and wild animals are the source of infection. This includes poultry, swine and cattle. Salmonella, therefore, is commonly associated with foodstuffs derived from these animals. Pets that have become ill have been implicated in transferring infection.

## How is Salmonella spread?

The organism is passed to humans by three main methods:

- Through ingestion of infected food, or water; this can include raw and under-cooked foods such as poultry and meats or commercially processed meat produces, raw sausages and unpasteurised milk.
- Through contact with infected pets, (especially puppies or kittens), through infected wild animals.
- Through infected humans, especially when diarrhoea is present.

## Incubation Period

The incubation period is 6 to 72 hours, but usually about 12 to 36 hours.

## Preventative Measures

- Thoroughly cook all foodstuffs derived of animal origin.
- Avoid recontamination of cooked foods by separating cooked foods from uncooked foods.
- Stress hand washing before preparation of food.
- Always wash hands after visiting the toilet.
- Ensure frozen foods are properly thawed before cooking.
- When food is not consumed immediately after cooking, cook it quickly and refrigerate within 1½ hours.

## Control Measures

- Exclude symptomatic individuals from foodhandling and care of elderly residents.
- Stress proper handwashing.
- Quarantine of individuals is not needed.
- There is no specific treatment generally given other than hydration and electrolyte replacement.
- Cleanse the toilets, wash hand basins, door and flush handles thoroughly and frequently.

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