

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott
Governor

John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS
State Surgeon General & Secretary

Vision: To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

SALMONELLA

Accompanying: Hand Washing Fact Sheet

What is Salmonella?

Salmonella is a bacterial food-borne disease that causes gastroenteritis.

What are the signs and symptoms of a Salmonella infection?

Symptoms of a Salmonella infection include diarrhea, abdominal pain, nausea, fever and sometimes vomiting. Dehydration, especially in infants and the elderly, may be severe and fever is always present.

How are Salmonella infections spread?

Eating contaminated food of animal origin is the most common way of getting the infection. Spread by person-to-person contact may also occur. It is possible for some without symptoms to transmit the bacteria. Pet turtles, reptiles, and chickens can also pass the bacteria to humans.

What is the incubation period of Salmonella and how long is it contagious?

The incubation period is 6 to 72 hours and it is communicable throughout the course of the infection, usually several days to several weeks or more.

What should I do if I think I have a Salmonella infection?

Persons who have these symptoms should see their physicians. Salmonella is a reportable disease to the Health Department. Parents should **NOT** send their children to school or daycare until their symptoms have been resolved. Antibiotics are usually not indicated as they may prolong the duration of fecal shedding.

How can I prevent myself and others from getting a Salmonella infection?

Careful hand washing with soap and water, as outlined in the accompanying handout, after petting animals, using the toilet, changing a baby's diaper, before eating, preparing food, and preparing baby formula, will prevent spread of the disease. Heating foods thoroughly, refrigerating foods after opening or cooking them, not eating raw meat or eggs, and washing utensils and cutting boards that have had contact with raw meats, poultry, or eggs will also help prevent spread of the bacteria. Limiting exposure of children under 5 years of age and immunocompromised children to reptiles, rodents and farm animals can also prevent Salmonella infection.

For more information, please contact the Florida Department of Health in Orange County, Epidemiology Program at 407-858-1420. You may also visit the Epidemiology Program website, <http://orchd.com/generalHealth/epidemiology/index.asp>, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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website, <http://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/>, or the DOH-Orange School Health website at <http://orchd.com/personalHealth/schoolHealth/index.asp> for additional information.