

SALMONELLOSIS PREVENTION FOR HOUSEHOLDS WITH AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES

There are several things you can do to protect yourself and your family from Salmonellosis if you have a pet amphibian or reptile.

- Do not allow young children, the elderly, or anyone with a weakened immune system to touch amphibians or reptiles.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water right after contact with amphibians, reptiles, or anything in their habitat. Water from these animals' habitats is especially prone to being contaminated with *Salmonella*.
- Do not keep amphibian or reptile habitats in the child's bedroom or play area. Any animal equipment and food and water containers should be cleaned outside the house. Equipment, including the tank water, can be contaminated with *Salmonella* and other bacteria. Use bleach to disinfect areas where the animal or its habitat has been cleaned.
- To prevent contamination, keep amphibians and reptiles out of the kitchen and any other areas where food and drink is prepared, served or consumed.
- Do not let reptiles and amphibians move freely around the house. Keep them out of the kitchen or any area where food is prepared and consumed.
- After you touch amphibians or reptiles, always wash hands with soap and water.

Please consult your doctor or the Pasadena Public Health Laboratory if you would like to schedule a test.

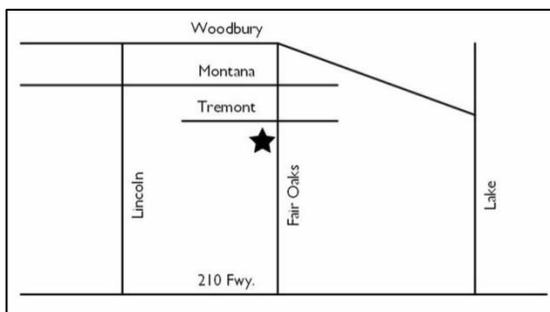


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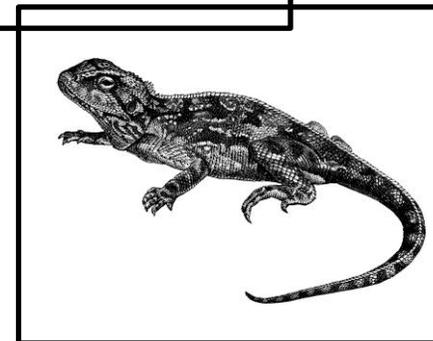
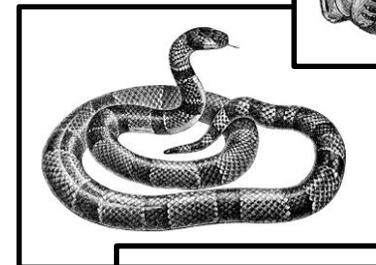
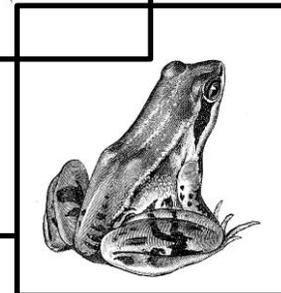
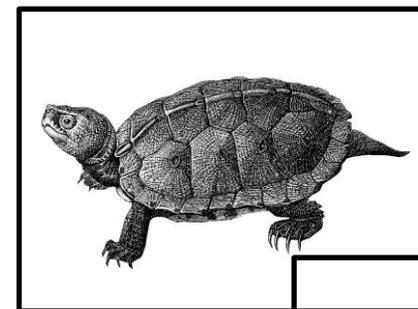
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SALMONELLOSIS



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WHAT IS SALMONELLOSIS?

Salmonellosis is a disease caused by the *Salmonella* bacteria. It is one of the most common illnesses, with about 400,000 cases reported in the U.S. annually. However, many milder cases go undiagnosed and unreported, and therefore the true number of cases is actually higher.

Salmonellosis infections can be transferred between humans and animal hosts. Many infections are due to ingestion of contaminated foods.

People most at risk for severe infections include young children, the elderly, and those with weakened immune systems.

HOW DO WE GET SALMONELLOSIS?

People get infected with *Salmonella* by eating foods contaminated with animal feces. *Salmonella* lives in the intestinal tracts of humans and other animals, including birds. Any food can be contaminated with the bacteria; including beef, poultry, milk, eggs, fruits, and vegetables. These foods usually look and smell normal.

Salmonella can sometimes be found inside normal-looking eggs. Eating undercooked or raw infected eggs can cause illness.

Recent *Salmonella* outbreaks have been due to foods such as raw almonds, unpasteurized orange juice and milk, and raw mung bean sprouts.

Salmonella can also be spread from person-to-person or from certain animals to people. Animals such as amphibians (frogs, toads, salamanders, and newts) and reptiles (turtles, lizards, and snakes) are more likely to carry *Salmonella*. In 1975, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) banned the sale of turtles

with shells less than 4 inches to prevent *Salmonella*. Other pets such as dogs, cats, and fish can also carry the bacteria.

Person-to-person contamination of *Salmonella* occurs when the bacteria is not eliminated. Preparing food without properly washing hands is a common way to contaminate the food and spread the bacteria.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Salmonellosis infection symptoms may include headaches, muscle aches, diarrhea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, chills, fever, nausea and dehydration. These symptoms show about 12-72 hours after infection. The illness will usually last 4 to 7 days, and most people will recover without treatment.

In some cases, the diarrhea may be so severe that hospitalization is necessary. In these patients, *Salmonella* may spread from the intestines to the blood stream and other body sites. Severe Salmonellosis infections like this can cause death if not treated promptly with antibiotics.

HOW IS SALMONELLOSIS DIAGNOSED AND TREATED?

Salmonellosis symptoms can be similar to other disease symptoms, or can be mild enough that they go unrecognized. Determining that *Salmonella* is the cause of the illness depends on certain laboratory tests that identify the bacteria in the stool of an infected person.

Salmonellosis usually lasts 4-7 days and often does not require treatment other than an increased intake of fluids. Persons with severe diarrhea may require rehydration with intravenous fluids. Antibiotics are not usually necessary unless the infection spreads from the intestines.

Consult a doctor if you still have symptoms after 7 days.

DOES MY PET HAVE *SALMONELLA*?

Dogs and cats that become sick from *Salmonella* will generally have diarrhea that may contain blood or mucus. These animals may seem more tired than usual, and may have a fever or vomit.

If your pet presents signs of illness or you are concerned that your pet may have *Salmonella*, **please contact a veterinarian.** Let your veterinarian know what your pet has consumed lately.

Like humans, some dogs or cats may have *Salmonella* but may not appear to be sick.

CAN *SALMONELLA* FROM FOOD SOURCES BE PREVENTED?

Salmonella is more likely to be contracted at home rather than in a restaurant. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water after using the bathroom and before handling food.

- Make sure that foods are cooked to a safe internal temperature: 145°F for whole meats, 160°F for ground meats, and 165°F for all poultry.
- Keep eggs refrigerated and throw away any cracked or dirty eggs.
- Defrost frozen food in the refrigerator or microwave.
- Rinse poultry in cold water before cooking.
- Avoid consuming raw hamburger meat, raw milk, and raw eggs (use pasteurized eggs in recipes that call for raw eggs).
- When handling foods like raw meat, eggs, and milk, avoid cross-contamination by using different utensils, plates, cutting boards, and counter tops before and after cooking. Wash hands in between handling those foods.
- Don't touch raw foods like poultry, meat, eggs and milk and then an infant (e.g. feed, change diaper at the same time).