

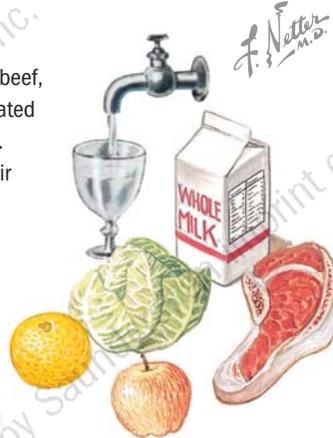
MANAGING SALMONELLOSIS

Salmonella
(magnified view)



Salmonellosis is an infection of the stomach and intestines that's caused by *Salmonella*, a kind of bacteria. It's similar to stomach flu.

Eating contaminated foods (eggs, beef, poultry, fruit) or drinking contaminated water or milk can lead to infection. Food handlers who don't wash their hands after going to the bathroom can also spread it.



Diarrhea is the main symptom but others include nausea, vomiting, fever, and headaches.



Your doctor makes a diagnosis from your medical history and physical exam, and at times, by testing a stool sample. Blood tests are sometimes done to rule out other diseases.



What Is Salmonellosis?

Salmonella is the name of a kind of bacteria. Salmonellosis is an infection of the stomach and intestines that's caused by *Salmonella*. It's similar to stomach flu. Most people with mild infection get better in 4 to 7 days without treatment. An epidemic can occur when many people eat the same contaminated foods, such as at a restaurant. Some people have such severe diarrhea that they may need a hospital stay for intravenous fluids and antibiotics.

What Causes Salmonellosis?

People get *Salmonella* infection by eating contaminated foods, especially eggs, beef, poultry, or fruit, or by drinking contaminated water or milk. Cooking helps reduce but does not eliminate chances of getting infected. *Salmonella* can spread among people when they don't wash their hands after going to the bathroom. *Salmonella* can also spread from pets, such as turtles and iguanas, to people.

What Are the Symptoms of Salmonellosis?

Diarrhea is the main symptom. It may be mild, with two or three loose bowel movements (stools) daily. It may be severe, with watery diarrhea every 10 or 15 minutes. Other symptoms are blood in stool, stomach cramps, vomiting, fever, and headaches.

How Is Salmonellosis Diagnosed?

The doctor makes a diagnosis by testing stool, blood, and urine samples. Blood tests are also done to rule out other diseases.

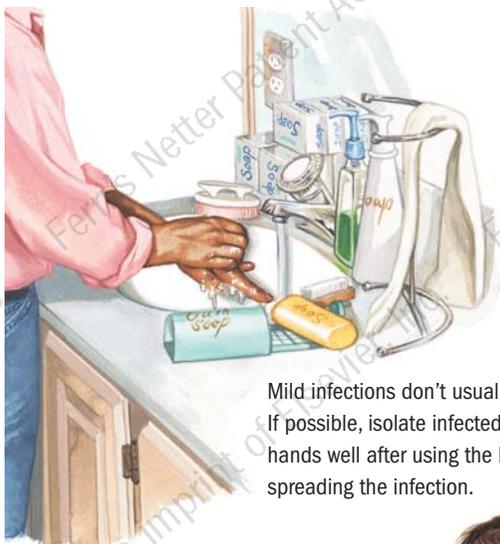
How Is Salmonellosis Treated?

Mild infections (gastroenteritis) don't usually need medicine. Most go away in 24 to 48 hours.

If possible, infected people should be isolated or at least use a separate bathroom. Good hand washing is essential to avoid spreading the infection.

People who have fever and more severe infection (typhoid fever) will need antibiotics. Drinking more fluids helps prevent dehydration. A liquid diet including Gatorade® or Pedialyte® should be followed until diarrhea stops. Then, eating regular foods can slowly begin again. Dairy products can make the diarrhea worse and should be avoided for several days.

People with severe diarrhea may need intravenous fluids.



Mild infections don't usually need medicine. If possible, isolate infected people. Wash your hands well after using the bathroom to avoid spreading the infection.

Drink more fluids to prevent dehydration.



Handle and store food correctly. For example, don't let a salad with mayonnaise sit for hours at room temperature or in the hot sun.

If possible, have the infected person use a separate bathroom. If it's not possible, don't let others use the same bathroom unless it was well cleaned.



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NOTES

DOs and DON'Ts in Managing Salmonellosis:

- ✓ **DO** thoroughly cook food such as meat and poultry.
- ✓ **DO** handle and store food correctly. For example, don't let a salad with mayonnaise sit for hours at room temperature.
- ✓ **DO** drink only pasteurized milk.
- ✓ **DO** use only bottled water when traveling. Ask your doctor about how to prepare if you're traveling to a developing country.
- ✓ **DO** avoid contact with anyone who has a *Salmonella* infection.
- ✓ **DO** avoid animals, such as pet turtles, that could be infected.
- ✓ **DO** wash your hands well after using the bathroom to avoid spreading the infection.
- ✓ **DO** drink watered-down electrolyte solutions, such as sports drinks, until diarrhea stops.
- ✓ **DO** eat a bland, high-calorie, well-balanced diet after diarrhea stops.
- ✓ **DO** call your doctor if you're dehydrated (have dry wrinkled skin and dark or less urine).
- ✓ **DO** call your doctor if you have symptoms longer than 48 hours, high fever, worse diarrhea, or yellow skin or eyes.
- ⊘ **DON'T** let others use the same bathroom unless it was thoroughly cleaned.
- ⊘ **DON'T** eat raw or undercooked poultry or eggs or drink unpasteurized milk.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact the following sources:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Tel: (800) 232-4636
Website: <http://www.cdc.gov/salmonella>
- Intestinal Disease Foundation
Tel: (412) 261-5888
Website: <http://www.intestinalfoundation.org>
- National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
Tel: (866) 284-4107
Website: <http://www3.niaid.nih.gov/topics/salmonellosis/default.htm>