

Environmental Services

Salmonella

What is Salmonella?

Salmonella is a bacteria. If you get infected with it you may get some or all of the following symptoms:

- Fever
- Feeling sick
- Vomiting
- Stomach ache
- Diarrhoea

How long might I be ill?

Symptoms usually start 6 hours to 3 days after becoming infected with Salmonella. They can last from between a few days to three weeks.

Sometimes people can have salmonella in their faeces for several weeks after they have recovered.

How did I get Salmonella?

There are several possible ways of catching it which include:

- Eating or drinking contaminated food, milk or water.
- Eating or drinking raw or undercooked meat, especially poultry, or eggs (cooking destroys the bug).
- Contact with pets, especially puppies and kittens.
- Sometimes it is passed from person to person.

How can I stop it from spreading?

- Wash your hands thoroughly.
- Clean surfaces in the bathroom such as taps, toilet handles and door handles.
- Do not share towels.
- Supervise small children who are washing their hands.
- Wash soiled linen on a “hot cycle” in the washing machine. If there is a lot of faecal material, as much as possible should be disposed of down the toilet.

Should infected people stay away from work or school?

Food handlers, health care workers and children in day care must obtain the approval of the Environmental Health Department before returning to their occupation.

Why has the Environmental Health Officer (EHO) contacted me?

They want to find out how and where you might have caught Salmonella and to advise you about how to avoid passing it on to other people.

The (EHO) Environmental Health Officer may ask for details of:

- The person who is ill.
- Other people living in the house.
- What symptoms you had.
- Whether you have been abroad recently.

They may also ask for faecal specimens from you and members of your household.

How can I prevent Salmonella in the future?

Hands

- Wash your hands thoroughly before preparing food and after handling raw meat.
- Wash hands after using the toilet.
- Wash hands after changing a baby's nappy.
- Help small children wash their hands.

Fridges

- Keep all perishable foods in the fridge – separate raw meat from other foods.
- Don't store raw and cooked food close together. Put raw food in containers if possible and put it near the bottom of the fridge so other food does not get contaminated.
- Defrost frozen food thoroughly before cooking it.
- Keep your fridge below 5°C.
- Take food out of the fridge just before using it.

Preparing food

- Keep kitchen surfaces and utensils clean.
- Do not use utensils that have been used for preparing raw meat to prepare other foods.

Food and cooking

- Cook all poultry and meat products thoroughly (so that the meat and juices are not pink).
- Do not reheat meat or poultry more than once.
- If you have to reheat food make sure it is piping hot.
- If you have a barbecue, make sure you cook poultry and meat thoroughly, that you keep the food in the fridge until you are ready to cook it and that it is eaten as soon as it is cooked.
- Don't eat undercooked eggs, or food that contains raw or undercooked eggs (e.g. some kinds of home made mayonnaise).
- Don't buy food that is past its 'sell by' date and don't eat it after its 'use by' date.
- Take extra care if you are travelling to countries with poor sanitation and water supplies. Salads, unpeeled or unwashed fruit, tap water and drinks with ice in may all contain contaminated water. Do not eat meat, poultry or eggs that are not fully cooked.

Pets and other animals

- Don't allow pets in the kitchen when preparing food.
- Ensure children and adults wash their hands after handling pets or other animals and before eating.

Further Information

If you would like further information, please contact:

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DX: 39751 Rochford

For more information on food safety please visit our website
<http://www.rochford.gov.uk> and follow the links from Business to
Food Safety or telephone 01702 318045



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