



Gila County
Health & Emergency Management

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

5515 South Apache Ave., Suite 400, Globe, AZ 85501

PHONE: (928) 402-8811

Salmonella Fact Sheet

Background

Salmonella is a group of bacteria that lives in the intestinal tract of warm-blooded and cold-blooded animals. In humans, *Salmonella* is a common cause of diarrheal illness. In the United States, an estimated 1.2 million persons become sick with *Salmonella* each year. Anyone can become infected with *Salmonella*, but infection is most common in children under the age of 5. Young children, the elderly, and immunocompromised individuals are the most likely to have severe infections. In the United States, *Salmonella* causes an estimated 450 deaths annually.

Symptoms

Symptoms generally develop 1 to 3 days after exposure. Infected persons usually experience diarrhea, abdominal pain, fever, and occasionally vomiting. Bloodstream infections are less common, but can be severe.

Transmission

Salmonella bacteria are found in the intestinal tract of infected people and can be shed in their feces for up to four weeks after their symptoms resolve. Infected persons can spread the bacteria if they do not wash their hands well enough after using the bathroom. Many animals and reptiles have *Salmonella* in their intestinal tract, without showing symptoms of illness. The most common ways to become infected with *Salmonella* are:

- Contact with an infected person
- Consuming foods or liquids contaminated by an infected person
- Eating raw or undercooked poultry, eggs, or meats
- Handling reptiles contaminated with *Salmonella*

Diagnosis

Laboratory tests can detect *Salmonella* from a stool sample. The test can also identify the specific type of *Salmonella* and which antibiotics (if any) should be used to treat it.

Treatment

Illness usually resolves in 4 to 7 days and often does not require treatment unless the person becomes severely dehydrated or the infection spreads beyond the intestines. Antibiotics are usually not necessary.

Prevention

- Do not eat raw or undercooked eggs, poultry, or meats
- Poultry should be well-cooked, with no pink in the middle
- Do not consume raw or unpasteurized milk or other dairy products
- Produce should be washed well before eating
- Do not prepare raw meats and vegetables on the same surface
- Wash hands after contact with animal feces
- Wash hands immediately after handling reptiles



For more information

If you need more information, please contact your primary care physician or Gila County Division of Health & Emergency Management at (928) 402-8811.