

Salmonellosis

What is salmonellosis?

Salmonellosis is a common bacterial infection caused by any of more than 2,000 strains of *Salmonella*. These bacteria infect the intestinal tract and occasionally the blood. Annually, there are 600 to 800 cases reported in Washington.

What are the symptoms of salmonellosis?

Symptoms can include severe diarrhea, bloody diarrhea, fever, chills, abdominal discomfort, and occasionally vomiting. The symptoms generally appear one to three days after exposure. Serious bloodstream infections can occur, particularly in the very young or elderly.

How does a person get salmonellosis?

People are most often infected by eating or drinking contaminated food or water or by contact with infected people or animals. Salmonellosis is typically a food-borne illness acquired from contaminated raw poultry, eggs, and unpasteurized milk and cheese products. Less commonly, outbreaks have been associated with contamination of produce, cereal, candy, spices, and beverages. Other sources of exposure include contact with infected animals, especially turtles, iguanas, other reptiles, chicks, cattle and poultry.

When is an infected person contagious?

The infectious period can vary from several days to many months. Those who have been treated with oral antibiotics tend to carry the bacteria longer than others. Infected food handlers, health care workers, and individuals associated with daycare must obtain the approval of their local health department before returning to work or daycare.

What is the treatment for salmonellosis?

Most people recover on their own without medication. Antibiotics and antidiarrheal drugs are generally not recommended. Some people require intravenous fluids to prevent dehydration.

Where can I get more information?

<http://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/>

Salmonella rates in Washington State

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/notify/nc/incidence/salmonella.pdf>

