



Salmonella

Salmonella Outbreaks Linked to Backyard Poultry

 Investigation Notice

Posted May 23, 2024

Public health officials are investigating multistate outbreaks of *Salmonella* linked to contact with backyard poultry. Any backyard poultry can carry *Salmonella* germs that can make you sick. Always take steps to stay healthy around your flock.

Fast Facts

- Illnesses: 109
- Hospitalizations: 33
- Deaths: 0
- [States](#): 29
- Investigation status: Active



Backyard Poultry and *Salmonella*

Backyard poultry, such as chickens and ducks, can carry *Salmonella* germs even if they look healthy and clean. These germs can easily spread to anything in the areas where the poultry live and roam.

You can get sick from touching your backyard poultry or anything in their environment and then touching your mouth or food and swallowing *Salmonella* germs.

What You Should Do



- **Wash your hands**
 - Always wash your hands with soap and water immediately after touching backyard poultry, their eggs, or anything in the area where they live and roam.
 - Use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available. Consider keeping hand sanitizer at your coop.
- **Be safe around backyard flocks**
 - Don't kiss or snuggle backyard poultry, and don't eat or drink around them. This can spread *Salmonella* germs to your mouth and make you sick.
 - Keep your backyard poultry and the supplies you use to care for them (like feed containers and shoes you wear in the coop) outside of the house. You should also clean the supplies outside the house.
- **Supervise kids around flocks**
 - Always supervise children around backyard poultry and make sure they [wash their hands properly](#).
 - Don't let children younger than 5 years touch chicks, ducklings, or other backyard poultry. Young children are more likely to get sick from germs like *Salmonella*.
- **Handle eggs safely**
 - Collect eggs often. Eggs that sit in the nest can become dirty or break.
 - Throw away cracked eggs. Germs on the shell can more easily enter the egg through a cracked shell.
 - Rub off dirt on eggs with a brush, a cloth, or fine sandpaper. Don't wash eggs because colder water can pull germs into the egg.
 - Refrigerate eggs to keep them fresh and slow the growth of germs.
 - Cook eggs until both the yolk and white are firm, and cook egg dishes to an internal temperature of 160°F to kill all germs.

Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any of these severe symptoms:








- Diarrhea and a fever higher than 102°F
- Diarrhea for more than 3 days that is not improving
- Bloody diarrhea
- So much vomiting that you cannot keep liquids down
- Signs of dehydration, such as:
 - Not peeing much
 - Dry mouth and throat
 - Feeling dizzy when standing up

What Stores Selling Backyard Poultry Should Do

- **Source poultry from hatcheries that take steps to reduce *Salmonella* contamination.**
 - These hatcheries include those that have adopted the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) [best management practices to mitigate *Salmonella* contamination](#)  [PDF – 25 pages] [↗](#) and those that voluntarily participate in the [USDA National Poultry Improvement Plan](#) [↗](#) (USDA-NPIP) [U.S. *Salmonella* Monitored Program](#)  [PDF – 17 pages] [↗](#) .
- **Clean and sanitize poultry display areas between shipments of new poultry.**
 - First be sure to remove dirt and other debris from the display. Then apply disinfectant on the surface for the proper contact time recommended on the disinfectant label.

- **Help keep your customers healthy.**
 - Provide handwashing stations or hand sanitizers next to poultry display areas and tell customers to wash hands right after leaving these areas.
 - Display poultry out of reach of customers, especially children, so they cannot easily touch the poultry.
 - Provide health information to owners and potential buyers of poultry before purchase. This [informational poster](#)  [PDF – 1 page] describes ways to stay healthy with backyard flocks. Place it right beside flock display areas, and hand it out to customers.
- **Learn more about how to protect your customers and employees from *Salmonella* and other diseases shared between animals and humans.**
 - Read the [Compendium of Measures to Prevent Zoonotic Diseases Associated with Non-Traditional Pets](#)  .

What Backyard Poultry Hatcheries Should Do

- Use [best management practices](#)  [PDF – 25 pages]  to help prevent *Salmonella* in poultry.
- Participate in the voluntary USDA-NPIP [U.S. *Salmonella* Monitored Program](#)  [PDF – 17 pages]  and certify that your flocks are monitored for *Salmonella* germs.
- **Provide health information to owners and potential buyers of poultry before purchase.** This [informational poster](#)  [PDF – 1 page] describes ways to stay healthy with backyard flocks. This [checklist](#)  provides a list of materials for new backyard flock owners, as well as providing tips on how to stay healthy when caring for backyard poultry. This [graphic](#)  can be printed as a sticker and placed on poultry shipping boxes.

Symptoms of *Salmonella*

- Most people infected with *Salmonella* experience diarrhea, fever, and stomach cramps.
 - Symptoms usually start 6 hours to 6 days after swallowing the bacteria.
 - Most people recover without treatment after 4 to 7 days.
- Some people—especially children younger than 5 years, adults 65 years and older, and people with weakened immune systems—may experience more severe illnesses that require medical treatment or hospitalization.
- For more information about *Salmonella*, see [the *Salmonella* Questions and Answers page](#).



Investigation Details



Map



Timeline

See Also

- [FDA: *Salmonella* and Eggs](#) 

- [Healthy People, Healthy Poultry](#)
- [Previous Outbreaks Linked to Poultry](#)
- [CDC Coops Videos](#)
- [Bird Flu Current Situation Summary](#)

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How helpful was this page?



Not helpful

Very helpful