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Monthly Safety Blast

Produced by the Southwest Center for Agricultural Health, Injury Prevention and Education

April 2017

Salmonella and Easter

Peep, chirp, quack! They're so cute. They're so fluffy. And they just might make you sick. It's that time of the year again when we enjoy giving or receiving baby poultry as Easter gifts. Before giving baby poultry as gifts, you must consider what health risks may be involved while handling these cute babies. Many baby poultry, such as chicks, ducklings, goslings, and baby turkeys, can carry harmful germs called *Salmonella*. Salmonella infection (salmonellosis) is a common bacterial disease that affects the intestinal tract.



According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), children can be exposed to *Salmonella* by holding, cuddling, or kissing the birds and by touching things where the bird lives, such as cages or feed and water bowls. Young children are especially at risk for illness because their immune systems are still developing and because they are more likely than adults to put their fingers or other items into their mouths.

How do adults/children become infected?

Live poultry may have *Salmonella* germs in their droppings and on their bodies (feathers, feet, and beaks) even when they appear healthy and clean. The germs can also get on cages, coops, hay, plants, and soil in the area where the birds live and roam. Additionally, the germs can be found on the hands, shoes, and clothing of those who handle the birds or work or play where they live and roam.

How do I reduce the risk?

DO

- *Always* wash hands thoroughly with soap and water right after touching live baby poultry or anything in the area where they live and roam. Use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available. Adults should supervise hand washing for young children.
- Clean any equipment or materials associated with raising or caring for live poultry outside the house, such as cages, feed or water containers.
- Give live poultry their own space to live, outside of your home.

DON'T

- Children younger than 5 years of age, older adults, or people with weak immune systems should not handle or touch chicks, ducklings, or other live poultry.
- Don't snuggle or kiss the birds, touch your mouth, or eat or drink around live baby poultry.
- Don't let live baby poultry inside the house, in bathrooms, or especially in areas where food or drink is prepared, served, or stored, such as kitchens or outdoor patios.
- Don't eat or drink in the area where the birds live or roam.
- Don't give live baby poultry as gifts to young children.

Signs & Symptoms

- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Fever
- Abdominal cramps

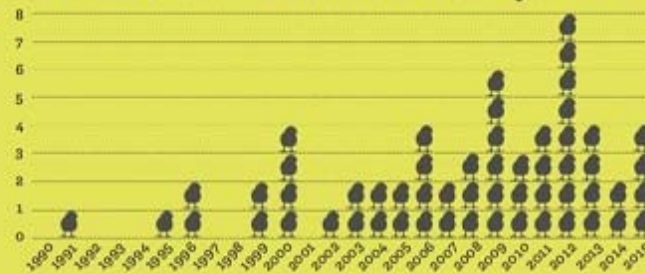
Salmonella can make people severely sick which can cause them to have to visit the emergency room. Children, seniors and those with immune issues are more likely than others to develop severe sickness. The CDC mentions that when severe infection occurs, *Salmonella* may spread from the intestines to the bloodstream and then to other body sites and can cause death unless the person is treated promptly with antibiotics.

Spring is the season for growth and vitality. Chicks, ducklings and other baby poultry are iconic during this time of year. Make sure you are taking the steps to safeguard your health when you are working or living near poultry.

Don't play chicken with your health

Since the 1990s,
57 *Salmonella*
outbreaks have been
linked to live poultry.

Number of *Salmonella* Outbreaks per Year



2,885
illnesses

450

hospitalizations

5

deaths

WASH YOUR HANDS

after handling live poultry
cdc.gov/zoonotic/gi



U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention



Take the [Salmonella and Easter](#) quiz to test your knowledge!

Resources:

- www.cdc.gov
- www.mayoclinic.org
- <http://theplate.nationalgeographic.com/2015/04/02/easter-chicks-salmonella/>

Disclaimer: The facts and information listed above are merely suggestions for your safety, but are in no way a comprehensive and exhausted list of all actions needed to insure your safety.

Monthly Blast written by our SW Ag Center Outreach Education Coordinator, Nykole Kafka Vance, MS, CEP, CHES

Sharing is caring!



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Produced by the Southwest Center for Agricultural Health, Injury Prevention and Education. For more information, contact us at 903-877-5998 or by email to agcenter@uthct.edu.
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