



Salmonellosis/Salmonella

What causes salmonellosis/salmonella infection?

Salmonellosis is an infection caused by bacteria. There are many types of salmonella germs. They live in the intestinal tract of humans and other animals. The infection is spread by eating foods contaminated by animal feces containing the germs, or by eating raw or undercooked eggs, poultry or meat containing the germs. These foods usually look and smell normal. Salmonellosis is often caused by unsanitary food handling in public eating places and the home.

What are the symptoms?

The most common symptoms are sudden onset of abdominal cramps, diarrhea, fever, nausea and sometimes vomiting. Some individuals may not have symptoms. Babies under 3 months of age and individuals with certain chronic diseases such as sickle cell anemia may develop bloodborne infection and become more seriously ill.

How is it diagnosed?

The infection is diagnosed by taking a culture of stool, blood or other body fluid.

How is it treated?

Symptoms usually go away in five to seven days. Treatment would depend on the severity of symptoms. Cultures of stool can remain positive for weeks after symptoms resolve.

School/Child Care Attendance

While children are having diarrhea, they are not allowed to attend school/childcare. As soon as the diarrhea stops, the child can re-enter school/childcare with good hygiene measures in place.

Home, School or Childcare Precautions

- Follow proper sanitation procedures for food handling and cooking.
- Wash hands:
 - Before, during and after food preparation.
 - After using the toilet or helping a child use the toilet.
 - Before and after diapering a child.
- Have children wash their hands after toileting, diapering and before meals and snacks.
- Keep nails short and clean.
- Disinfect diaper-changing areas after each change. Disinfect toys, toilets, sinks, water fountains and food preparation surfaces at least daily with a solution recommended by Public Health.
- Watch for symptoms among staff or students. Call the Public Health if two or more staff or students have symptoms within a 48-hour time span.

For more information, contact the Guilford County Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Division at 336-641-7777 or visit www.myguilford.com.