

Salmonellosis

Occupational Bacterial Infection from Handling Rodents

What is Salmonellosis?

Salmonellosis is a bacterial infection caused by *Salmonella* spp. It is found worldwide. *Salmonella* lives in the intestinal tracts of animals, including rodents.

How does infection occur?

Infection can occur from eating improperly cooked meats, eggs, or unpasteurized dairy products. *Salmonella* are usually transmitted to humans by eating foods contaminated with animal feces. Having direct contact with an infected animal and not washing hands can cause accidental fecal-oral ingestion of the bacteria, resulting in salmonellosis.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms of salmonellosis in humans causes diarrhea, fever, inflammation of the intestines, and abdominal pain. Symptoms start within 1 to 3 days after exposure. After symptoms start, they usually last for 4 to 7 days. Most cases do not require treatment, however those who are young, elderly, or immunocompromised may need more care.

How do I prevent it?

Wearing proper PPE and washing hands thoroughly after handling animals can help prevent any fecal-oral transmission. Fully cooking meats, eggs, and only drinking pasteurized milk can help prevent infection from animal products.

How is it treated?

Most cases require no treatment, but some cases may need antibiotics and/or supportive therapy.

Resources used:

- List of Zoonoses - Special Pet Topics (2016) *Merck Veterinary Manual* 11th ed.
- The Center for Food Security and Public Health Zoonotic Disease Factsheets: Salmonellosis
- The Center for Food Security and Public Health Zoonotic Transmission Routes: Salmonellosis