

## Salmonella

### Background Information

Salmonella bacteria usually cause a mild, self-limiting diarrhoeal disease, although it can occasionally be severe. The bacteria can be found in the guts of many wild and domestic animals. (Other types of Salmonella bacteria cause typhoid and paratyphoid fever, but these infections cannot be caught from animals).

### Organism

*Salmonella* species

### Incidence and Transmission

Salmonellosis is very common in the UK, with thousands of cases each year. The bacteria are found in the gut of many wild and domestic animals, especially poultry, swine and reptiles. It is most commonly spread via the eating of undercooked chicken, eggs or meat. It can also be found in faecally-contaminated soil or water.

Person to person spread can occur due to poor hygiene.

### Occupations and processes where Salmonella may present a risk

Occupational exposure to *Salmonella* species may occur in those who:

- are in contact with infected animals or humans; or
- work with materials or products from infected animals.

Occupations where there may be a risk of occupationally acquired Salmonella include:

- farmers – especially poultry farmers;
- zookeepers;
- reptile breeders;
- abattoir workers, meat processing plant workers and butchers – handling chickens and pigs;
- veterinary surgeons;
- vegetable pickers and handlers;
- sewage and waste water workers; and
- healthcare and care workers.

### **Clinical Information**

The incubation period is 12–72 hours. Symptoms are diarrhoea, stomach cramps, vomiting and fever. The disease lasts 4–7 days and is usually self-limiting. Generally the only treatment required is rehydration therapy.

### **Control**

The following control measures reduce the risk of infection:

- Good occupational hygiene practices should be followed, especially washing with warm water and soap.
- A suitable disinfectant should be used.
- Good hygiene practices for animal husbandry should be followed.

### **Further Information**

[Public Health England – Salmonella](#)