



PREVENT. PROMOTE. PROTECT.

*Timothy I. Ingram
Health Commissioner*

*250 William Howard Taft Road, 2nd Floor
Cincinnati, OH 45219*

*Phone 513.946.7800
Fax 513.946.7890*

hamiltoncountyhealth.org

Contact: Megan Hummel, Public Affairs Specialist
Phone: 513-946-7808
E-mail: megan.hummel@hamilton-co.org
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NEWS

Simple Steps to Steer Clear of Salmonella

HAMILTON COUNTY, OHIO – Salmonella has gained national attention lately due to contaminated tomatoes, jalapenos and peanut butter products. But Salmonella is actually very common in many of the foods we eat. Every year, approximately 40,000 cases of Salmonella are reported in the United States. There are several simple steps you can take to keep yourself and your family safe from illness caused by Salmonella bacteria.

Wash Your Hands Often

- Always wash hands after using the bathroom, coughing and sneezing.
- Hands should also be washed before handling any food, and between handling different food items.
- People should wash their hands after contact with animal feces. Since reptiles are particularly likely to have Salmonella, everyone should immediately wash their hands after handling reptiles.
- To clean hands effectively, use warm water and soap and work up a lather for 20 seconds before rinsing. Dry with a clean towel.

Handle Food Properly

- All produce, even those with skins, should be thoroughly washed before consuming.
- Keep uncooked meats separate from produce, cooked foods and ready-to-eat foods.
- Hands, cutting boards, counters, knives, and other utensils should be washed after contact with uncooked foods.
- Thoroughly cooking foods can prevent Salmonella. Poultry should be cooked to an internal temperature of 165 degrees. Ground beef should be cooked to an internal temperature of 155 degrees. Steak should be cooked to 145 degrees.

Avoid Raw or Unpasteurized Eggs and Milk

- Raw or undercooked eggs or egg products may be a source of Salmonella.
- Certain foods may contain raw eggs, including homemade hollandaise sauce, Caesar and other homemade salad dressings, tiramisu, homemade ice cream, homemade mayonnaise, cookie dough, and frostings.
- Children under five, the elderly, pregnant women and those with compromised immune systems should not consume raw or unpasteurized milk or other dairy products.

NEWS

Practice Safe Handling of Pets

Salmonella usually spreads to humans by eating contaminated foods such as beef, poultry, milk, eggs or vegetables. However, Salmonella can also be spread through contact with infected feces of pets. To avoid becoming infected, always wash your hands after contact with animal feces.

- Reptiles (snakes, lizards and turtles) are particularly likely to harbor Salmonella and people should always wash their hands immediately after handling a reptile, even if the reptile is healthy.
- Reptiles (including small turtles) are not appropriate pets for small children and should not be in the same house as an infant.
- Adults should be careful that children wash their hands after handling a reptile.
- Many other kinds of animals, including baby chicks and ducklings, dogs, cats, birds, horses and other farm animals can also pass salmonella to people.

Practicing these tips will not only protect you from Salmonella but also a host of other germs and infectious diseases. Remember, hand washing is the number one thing you can do to prevent the spread of germs.

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Tim Ingram is the Health Commissioner for Hamilton County. Hamilton County Public Health works to assure the 450,000 citizens living outside the cities of Cincinnati, Norwood, Sharonville and Springdale are safe from disease, injury and contamination.