

Code of Practice: Salmonella Infection in Domestic Pets

Salmonellosis is an illness caused by infection with one of the many salmonella bacteria: examples include *Salmonella* Enteritidis and *Salmonella* Typhimurium. It is a zoonosis which means that infection may be transmitted from animals to humans or humans to animals. Most human salmonella infections are a result of eating contaminated food. However, *Salmonella* infection can be acquired from household pets if the pet is infected with *Salmonella*. People may acquire infection by mouth, from contaminated hands or from their pet's bedding or surroundings. In some cases, domestic pets can be infected and spread infection while showing no signs of illness.

People who are ill with salmonellosis commonly have diarrhoea, abdominal pain, vomiting and/or a flu-like illness. Children, the elderly, immune-compromised people, pregnant women, and occasionally healthy adults can be more seriously affected and may require hospital treatment.

The following simple precautions will assist in prevention of human salmonella infection:

- DO** Observe high standards of personal hygiene. Wear gloves and if necessary protective over-garments when working with animals known to be infected.
- DO** Wash your hands using hot water and soap immediately after handling an infected pet or soiled bedding, cleaning up any vomit or diarrhoea. Wash your hands thoroughly before eating, drinking, or smoking/vaping.
- DO** Take precautions to avoid spreading infection to other animals or people. Avoid very close contact between the sick pet, other pets and other members of the household, particularly very small children, and the elderly.
- DO** Clean and disinfect flooring and surfaces regularly where your pet may have regular contact and risk contaminating. Wash food and water bowls daily and hot wash bedding
- DO** Ensure that anyone in the house with diarrhoea, vomiting or flu-like illness consults their medical GP. Inform the GP if any *Salmonella* infection has been identified in animals in your household or that you have close contact with.
- DO NOT** Allow vulnerable people, including children, the elderly, immune-compromised or pregnant women to come into contact with sick pets if possible.
- DO NOT** Bring sick pets into any area where food is prepared or eaten.
- DO NOT** Allow sick pets to lick anyone's face if they are unwell
- DO NOT** Allow people with symptoms of Salmonellosis to work in areas of food preparation.

APHA is an Executive Agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and also works on behalf of the Scottish Government, Welsh Government and Food Standards Agency to safeguard animal and plant health for the benefit of people, the environment and the economy.