

Salmonella in Veterinary Practices

There is a problem with Salmonella contamination of the public water supply in Alamosa, CO, with multiple human cases of Salmonella. As a precaution, CVMA is distributing general information on Salmonella as well as reporting requirements and procedures.

The following answers for frequently asked questions are being distributed through the COHELP line of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

Can my pet become infected with Salmonella?

Yes, many types of animals can become infected with Salmonella, including pets, livestock, rodent, reptiles and many others. When infected, some animals may become quite ill with fever, vomiting, diarrhea and dehydration. Some animals, however, may not show any signs of illness when exposed to Salmonella or may show very mild signs.

Can my pets drink the contaminated tap water?

No, please give your pets bottled water or water that has been boiled.

What should I do if my pet shows signs of vomiting, diarrhea or fever?

If your pet shows signs of illness, including fever, loss of energy, vomiting or diarrhea, they should be examined as soon as possible by your veterinarian. Salmonella is a serious disease in pets, but is typically very treatable by your veterinarian.

What precautions should I take after handling animals or cleaning up after animals?

After handling or cleaning up after animals you should wash your hands thoroughly. If working in livestock areas, remove contaminated boots and coveralls before entering your home. Don't eat food in livestock areas.

Can livestock get Salmonella?

Yes, livestock may become infected and may occasionally become ill (particularly horses), showing fever, diarrhea and dehydration. Some livestock, however, may show mild or minimal signs and can appear normal while shedding Salmonella in the manure. Good hand washing practices and not wearing contaminated boots and clothes into your home will help reduce the chances of exposure to Salmonella from livestock.

Are children, elderly people or those with impaired immune systems at higher risk?

Yes, these groups are at higher risk of Salmonella from any source, including animals. Families should actively teach their children good hand washing practices.

Where can I find more information on Salmonella in animals?

For more information on Salmonella in animals, visit:

http://www.cfsph.iastate.edu/FastFacts/pdfs/nontyphoidal_salmonellosis_F.PDF

The Center for Food Security and Public Health provides this detailed information sheet on Salmonella for public health and animal health professionals:

http://www.cfsph.iastate.edu/Factsheets/pdfs/nontyphoidal_salmonellosis.pdf

Note: All human cases of Salmonella typhi are reportable to the Missouri DHSS within 24 hours and any other types of Salmonella are reportable within 7 days. Animal cases of Salmonella enteritidis and Salmonella pullorum are reportable to the State Veterinarian, but other animal Salmonella cases are not.

It is recommended, however, for veterinarians to notify local public health and State Veterinarian if they begin to see an unusual number of Salmonella cases in animals.