



# FOOD SAFETY UPDATE

## Contaminated Peanut Butter

The Food and Drug Administration is warning consumers not to eat certain jars of Peter Pan Peanut Butter or Great Value Peanut Butter due to risk of contamination with Salmonella

(a bacterium that causes foodborne illness). The affected jars have a product code located on the lid of the jar that begins with the number "2111." Both the Peter Pan and Great Value brands are manufactured in a single facility in Georgia by ConAgra. Great Value peanut butter made by



other manufacturers is not affected. The specific cause of this Salmonella contamination is unknown at this time.

Salmonella is relatively common. Every year approximately 40,000 cases are reported in the U.S. Since milder cases are not diagnosed or reported, the actual number of infections may be much greater. Salmonellosis is more common in the summer than winter. This newsletter will answer some frequently asked questions about the Salmonella germ.

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**Source:**  
Center for Disease Control  
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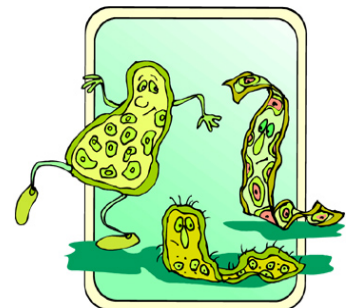
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### What is Salmonellosis?

Salmonellosis is an infection with a bacteria called Salmonella. Most persons infected with Salmonella develop diarrhea, fever, and abdominal cramps 12 to 72 hours after infection. The illness usually lasts 4 to 7 days and most persons recover without treatment. However, in some persons the diarrhea may be so severe that the patient needs to be hospitalized.

In these patients, the Salmonella infection may spread from the intestines to the blood

stream, and then to other body sites and can cause death unless the person is treated promptly with antibiotics. The elderly, infants, and those with impaired immune systems are more likely to have a severe illness.



## How Do People Catch Salmonella?

Salmonella lives in the intestinal tracts of humans and other animals, including birds.

Salmonella are usually transmitted to humans by eating foods contaminated with animal feces. Contaminated foods usually look and smell normal. Contaminated foods are often of animal origin, such as beef, poultry, milk, or eggs, but all foods, including vegetables may become contaminated. Many raw foods of animal origin are frequently contaminated, but fortunately, thorough cooking kills Salmonella. Food may also become contaminated by an infected



food handler, who did not wash his/her hands with soap after using the bathroom.

Salmonella may also be found in the feces of some pets, especially those with diarrhea. People can become infected if they do not wash their hands after contact with these feces. Reptiles are likely to harbor Salmonella and people should always wash their hands immediately after handling a reptile, even if the reptile is healthy. Adults should also be careful that children wash their hands after handling a reptile.

## How Can Salmonella Infections Be Diagnosed and Treated?

Many different kinds of illnesses can cause diarrhea, fever, or abdominal cramps. Laboratory tests are needed to identify Salmonella in the stools of an infected person. Once Salmonella has been identified, further testing can determine its specific type and which antibiotics could be used to treat it.

Salmonella infections usually resolve in 5-7 days

and often do not require treatment unless the patient becomes severely dehydrated or the infection spreads from the intestines. Persons with severe diarrhea may require intravenous fluids. Antibiotics are only necessary if the infection spreads from the intestines.

**Always make sure to wash your hands before eating.**

## What Can You Do to Prevent This Illness?

- To avoid cross-contamination, keep uncooked meats separate from produce, cooked foods and ready-to-eat foods.
- Wash hands, cutting boards, kitchen work surfaces, and utensils with soap and water immediately after they have been in contact with raw meat or poultry.
- Cook poultry, ground beef, and eggs thoroughly before eating. Do not eat or drink foods containing raw eggs or raw unpasteurized milk.
- If you are served undercooked meat, poultry or eggs in a restaurant, send it back for further cooking.
- Wash hands with soap after handling reptiles or birds, or after contact with pet feces.
- Avoid direct or indirect contact between reptiles (turtles, lizards, snakes) and infants or immunocompromised persons.
- Report all cases of salmonellosis to your public health department.