



Multi-state salmonella outbreak linked to raw chicken

October 17 2018 5:08 PM

CHICAGO – The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) is reporting five cases of multi-drug resistant *Salmonella infantis* illness. This is part of a multi-state outbreak, which includes 92 cases in 29 states and is being investigated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The initial investigation indicates a link to raw chicken. Nearly 90% of cases report preparing or eating chicken products that were purchased raw, including ground chicken, chicken pieces, and whole chicken.

“IDPH is working with our partners to investigate this multistate outbreak of *Salmonella* infections linked to raw chicken products,” said IDPH Director Nirav D. Shah, M.D., J. D. “This outbreak is a reminder to always handle raw chicken carefully and to cook chicken to an internal temperature of 165°F to prevent food poisoning.”

Most people affected by *Salmonella* develop diarrhea, fever, and abdominal cramps 12 to 72 hours after eating food contaminated by the bacteria. The illness usually lasts 4 to 7 days, and most people recover without treatment. However, diarrhea for some people may be so severe that they need to be hospitalized. The CDC has indicated there have been more hospitalizations with this outbreak than what is typically seen. The elderly, infants, and those with compromised immune systems are more likely to have a severe illness.

The outbreak strain was identified in live chickens and many types of raw chicken products, indicating it might be widespread in the chicken industry. The CDC continues to investigate the outbreak.

This outbreak is a reminder to follow food safety guidelines. When handling raw chicken, follow these steps to help prevent *Salmonella*:

- **Wash your hands.** Wash hands before and after preparing or eating food, after contact with animals, and after using the restroom or changing diapers. *Salmonella*

infections can spread from one person to another if hands have Salmonella germs on them.

- **Cook raw chicken thoroughly to kill harmful germs.** Chicken should always be cooked to an internal temperature of 165°F to kill harmful germs. Leftovers should be reheated to 165°F. Use a food thermometer to check and place it in the thickest part of the food.
- **Don't spread germs from raw chicken around food preparation areas.** Don't wash raw poultry before cooking; germs can splash around your kitchen. Thoroughly wash hands, counters, cutting boards, and utensils with warm, soapy water after they touch raw chicken. Use a separate cutting board for raw chicken and other raw meats if possible.
- **CDC does not recommend feeding raw diets to pets.** Germs like Salmonella in raw pet food can make your pets sick. Your family also can get sick by handling the raw food or cleaning up after your pet.

More information can be found on the CDC website at <http://www.cdc.gov/salmonella>