



MID-MICHIGAN DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Your public health team, connecting with our communities to achieve healthier outcomes

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Salmonella risk from chicks

Stanton- It's hard to resist little fluffy chicks and ducklings, but it may be best to admire them from afar, or at least be cautious when handling them. That's because under all that cuteness something harmful could be lurking- Salmonella germs.

Salmonella infections don't just come from contaminated food- they can come from contact with animals, too. Chickens, ducks, geese and turkeys can carry the germ in their droppings and on their bodies, even when they appear healthy and clean. All poultry can carry Salmonella, but chicks are especially likely carriers.

While it usually doesn't make the birds sick, Salmonella can cause serious illness when passed to people. Salmonella germs can cause diarrhea, vomiting, fever, and abdominal cramps lasting 4-7 days or more. Infants, seniors, and those with weakened immune systems are more likely than others to develop severe illness, so they should be extra cautious.

Follow these recommendations to help protect yourself and others:

- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water after touching poultry.
- If you raise poultry, clean all equipment, like cages and feed and water containers, outside the house.
- Never bring live poultry inside the house, or in areas where food or drink is prepared, served, or stored.
- Children younger than five years of age, the elderly, and people with weak immune systems should never handle or touch live poultry.
- Supervise children when they handle poultry and make sure they properly wash their hands afterwards.
- Don't snuggle or kiss the chicks.
- Don't touch your mouth, smoke, or eat or drink after handling live poultry.

If you raise poultry, see a display of the feathered cuties in a store this spring, or come in contact with them elsewhere, remember to use caution to ensure you stay germ-free.

Mid-Michigan District Health Department serves the residents of Clinton, Gratiot and Montcalm Counties.

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