

For immediate release

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Health Division Investigating Salmonella Saintpaul Infections

Pontiac, Michigan – The Oakland County Health Division is investigating 15 cases of Salmonella saintpaul, a specific strain of salmonella. Cases have also been identified in other Michigan counties, as well as Ohio and Illinois.

“The ongoing investigation suggests that the salmonella is being spread through personal contact,” said Dr. Pamela Hackert, chief of medical services at the Health Division. “Residents are reminded to wash their hands thoroughly before every meal and after using the restroom.”

Salmonella is a bacteria that gets into the intestines and causes illness. Most persons infected develop diarrhea, fever, and abdominal cramps 12-72 hours after infection. The illness usually lasts 4-7 days, and most people recover without treatment. Infants, elderly persons, and those with impaired immune systems are at a higher risk of developing severe illness.

To reduce the risk of contracting salmonella:

- Handwashing is essential and one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of infection. Wash hands thoroughly, especially after using the bathroom, changing diapers, and before preparing and eating food. Rub hands vigorously with soap and warm running water for at least 20 seconds.
- Wash hands with soap after handling reptiles, birds, or baby chicks, and after contact with pet feces.
- Clean and disinfect all surface areas if someone in the household or workplace has symptoms, especially areas such as toilets, sinks, trashcans, doorknobs and faucet handles.
- Do not prepare food if you have symptoms and refrain from food preparation for at least three days after symptoms have ended, or two weeks after onset of clinical symptoms, whichever is longer.

For more information, call OCHD's Nurse on Call at 1-800-848-5533 or visit www.oakgov.com/health.

FOR MEDIA INQUIRIES ONLY: Please contact Dr. Pamela Hackert, chief of medical services for Oakland County Health Division, at 248-858-1276.