

Information for Veterinarians and Veterinary Professionals regarding Pets and the Peanut Butter and Peanut-Product Recall

Questions and Answers Related to Pets and the *Salmonella* Typhimurium Outbreak

as of February 14, 2009

CDC has been investigating the current *Salmonella* Typhimurium outbreak in humans in coordination with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and state and local health departments. In addition to human illness, animals may also have been affected. One laboratory-confirmed case of *Salmonella* in a dog from an Oregon household was reported, and further characterization of this *Salmonella* isolate is pending. *Salmonella* resembling the outbreak strain was isolated by a private laboratory from recalled peanut butter flavored dog biscuits from this dog's household. At least three states have reported incidents of dogs that have shown gastrointestinal signs consistent with *Salmonella* infection, and those animals have been known to have consumed peanut butter products on the FDA recall list.

Advise clients that you do not recommend giving away their pet or euthanizing their pet because of a *Salmonella* infection. Talk to clients about what precautions to follow in order to minimize the risk of illness to their family and how to safely clean up after their pet. Prescribe treatment recommendations to your clients and tell them to contact you if they have any questions. For up-to-date information on the *Salmonella* Typhimurium outbreak investigation, go to: <http://www.cdc.gov/Salmonella/typhimurium>.

Certain pet foods and pet treats may contain peanut butter or peanut products, including dog and cat treats and bird food. Pets may get *Salmonella* infections from eating contaminated pet products affected by the recall of peanut butter and peanut-containing products. People may get *Salmonella* infections from handling contaminated pet products, contact with infected pets (i.e., contact with pet feces or the anus or hair around the anus of the pet), or from cleaning up after their infected pets. Moreover, it should be made clear to clients that they can still touch their pets and interact with them; but they need to take extra precaution not to come in contact with their pet's feces or areas around the anus of the pet.

Dogs and cats can become ill due to a *Salmonella* infection and have diarrhea, fever, vomiting, decreased appetite, or abdominal pain; however, some dogs and cats may have a *Salmonella* infection, but can appear healthy and will not have diarrhea or other gastrointestinal symptoms. Like humans, some dogs and cats may not exhibit symptoms of salmonellosis but can be carriers and can infect other animals or humans. If your client has a pet that is known to have eaten any of the products on the FDA recall list and they have concerns that the pet may have salmonellosis, they may want to bring the pet to you, their veterinarian. Questions and answers on the recall, testing of animals and pet products, and suggested advice for veterinary clients are below.

Have any pet foods or treats been recalled?

Yes. Search the [FDA Searchable Database](http://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/peanutbutterrecall/index.cfm#PetFood) <http://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/peanutbutterrecall/index.cfm#PetFood> to look for recalled products.

For those without Internet access, telephone 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, for product recall information from the FDA website and for other information on *Salmonella*.

What type of samples should I collect from an animal suspected with a possible *Salmonella* infection and a history of exposure to a recalled pet product that contains peanut butter? What laboratory should I send the sample to for testing?

If you are presented with an animal suspected to have come in contact with recalled products or with clinical signs consistent with salmonellosis, the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) and the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) recommend submitting diarrhea (preferred) or vomitus samples to a state veterinary diagnostic laboratory for *Salmonella* culturing and pulsed-field gel electrophoresis testing (PFGE). Additionally, feces or stool samples can also be submitted for pets that appear healthy but were known to eat a recalled product. If your state laboratory isolates *Salmonella* but cannot perform PFGE, the laboratory may wish to forward the isolate to a laboratory that can perform the procedure such as one of the AAVLD labs in your area. To locate an AAVLD laboratory in your area, go to <http://www.aavld.org/mc/page.do?sitePageId=33930&orgId=aavld>, or go to the AAVLD's home page at <http://www.aavld.org/mc/page.do> and click on the "Accreditation" link on the left side menu bar.

Veterinarians who want to characterize *Salmonella* isolates from animals can submit these isolates to the Diagnostic Bacteriology Laboratory at the National Veterinary Services Laboratories in Ames, Iowa. Isolates should be submitted with a completed form VS 10-3 indicating whether serotyping, PFGE, or both are requested. Form VS 10-3 and additional information on sample submission is located at http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/lab_info_services/diagnos_tests.shtml

The pet's owner brought a leftover treat from a package of treats that were fed to a pet prior to the pet's illness, and requested the leftover treats be tested. Where do I send those samples?

Submit pet treat samples either to your state laboratory (call first to ensure they will accept food samples) or a veterinary laboratory that is a member of the Food Emergency Response Network (FERN) for microbiological agents. An alphabetical list of veterinary laboratories that are members of the FERN is below.

Athens Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, University of Georgia (Athens, GA) (hyperlink to <http://www.vet.uga.edu/dlab/>)

California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory (Davis, CA) (hyperlink to <http://cahfs.ucdavis.edu/>)

Centralia Animal Disease Laboratory, Illinois Dept of Agriculture (Centralia, IL) (hyperlink to <http://www.agr.state.il.us/AnimalHW/labs/centralialab.html>)
Department of Defense Veterinary Food Analysis & Diagnostic Laboratory (Fort Sam Houston, TX) (hyperlink to <http://www.vetlab.army.mil/>)
Indiana Animal Disease Diagnostic Lab at Purdue University (West Lafayette, IN) (hyperlink to <http://www.addl.purdue.edu/>)
Iowa State University Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (Ames, IA) (hyperlink to <http://vetmed.iastate.edu/diagnostic-lab>)
National Veterinary Services Laboratory (Ames, IA) (hyperlink to http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/lab_info_services/about_nvsl.shtml)
New Mexico Veterinary Diagnostic Services (Las Cruces, NM) (hyperlink to <http://128.123.206.6/animal-and-plant-protection/veterinary-diagnostic-services>)
Ohio Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory (Reynoldsburg, OH) (hyperlink to <http://www.agri.ohio.gov/addl/>)
Pennsylvania Veterinary Laboratory, Penn Dept of Agriculture (Harrisburg, PA) (hyperlink to <http://www.agriculture.state.pa.us/agriculture/cwp/view.asp?a=3&q=127711>)
or Pennsylvania State University Animal Diagnostic Laboratory (University Park, PA) (hyperlink to <http://vbs.psu.edu/adl/>)
South Dakota State University Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory (Brookings, SD) (hyperlink to <http://vetsci.sdstate.edu/>)
University of Minnesota Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (Twin Cities, MN) (hyperlink to <http://www.vdl.umn.edu/aboutVDL/home.html>)

To whom do I report a suspected or confirmed *Salmonella* illness in an animal?

Veterinarians and other individuals can report complaints about pet food and other animal feed to the FDA by calling the FDA consumer complaint coordinator in their state. Contact information can be found at the list of FDA's Consumer Complaint Coordinators located at <http://www.fda.gov/opacom/backgrounders/complain.html>. Reports should include product details such as lot number, brand name, expiration date, manufacturer or distributor, and location of purchase. Reports also should include medical information—including a veterinarian's report and diagnosis, signs of illness, numbers of animals that do and do not have the signs, and complete medical histories. Additionally, veterinarians should consider contacting the manufacturer so any necessary investigation can be initiated immediately.

Veterinarians and other individuals can also report the case to their state veterinarian/state public health veterinarian. For a state-by-state listing of state public health veterinarians, go to

<http://www.nasphv.org/Documents/StatePublicHealthVeterinariansByState.pdf>

For a state-by-state listing of state veterinarians, go to

<http://www.usaha.org/StateAnimalHealthOfficials.pdf>

Consumers may also wish to report the illness to the product manufacturer. The contact information should be available on the product package and/or the company's website.

What advice should I give clients about their pets and the recall?

Advise clients that you do not recommend giving away their pet or euthanizing their pet because of a *Salmonella* infection. Talk to them about taking precautions to minimize the risk of illness to their family and how to safely clean up after their pet. Prescribe treatment recommendations to your clients and tell them to contact you if they have any questions. You may also wish to refer them to the CDC web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/Salmonella/typhimurium> or to the FDA web site for a list of recalled peanut containing products at <http://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/peanutbutterrecall/index.cfm>

Be sure to tell the client that *Salmonella* infections are a zoonotic disease meaning that the infection can spread between animals and people. *Salmonella* is transmitted from animals to humans by the fecal oral route. Inform clients of proper hygiene and sanitation precautions to protect themselves and their family as well as any other pets they may have. It is important for people to wash their hands--and make sure children wash their hands--before and, especially, after feeding treats to pets. Also, advise clients to always wash hands right after handling or cleaning up after their pets. If the client or any of their family members are ill, encourage them to contact a physician immediately.

Additional information to share with clients:

Follow these simple guidelines to prevent getting a *Salmonella* infection from your pet:

- After contact with animal feces (stool), wash your hands well with soap and running water for at least 20 seconds, then rinse and dry your hands with a paper towel.
- Clean up after your pet. If you have a cat, scoop the litter box daily and dispose of the stool in a tightly sealed plastic bag. If you have a dog, clean up the stool while on walks or from the yard and dispose of the stool in a tightly sealed plastic bag.
- Be sure to wash your hands with soap and running water after touching or feeding your pet.

Where can I learn more about this outbreak investigation?

To learn the latest information on this outbreak investigation, please visit CDC's website at <http://www.cdc.gov/Salmonella/typhimurium>.

For questions and answers about pets and this outbreak, veterinarians and clients can visit:

http://www.cdc.gov/Salmonella/typhimurium/Salmonella_pets.html

For additional information, please visit:

American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) Information for Veterinarians

http://www.avma.org/aa/answers_for_vets.asp

AVMA News: Peanut Butter Pet Treats Recalls Related to Probe of Possible *Salmonella* Poisoning

http://www.avma.org/aa/peanut_butter_recall.asp

Oregon Public Health Officials Confirm First *Salmonella* Case in Dog

<http://oregon.gov/DHS/news/2009news/2009-0206.pdf>