



## A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

### *Wash Away Salmonella*

*Multistate Outbreak of Human Salmonella Typhimurium Infections Associated with Aquatic Frogs — United States, 2008–2009*

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[Announcer] This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC — safer, healthier people.

[Dr. Gaynes] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the *MMWR*, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

*Salmonella* is a common infection that's usually caused by eating raw or undercooked foods. However, approximately 74,000 cases each year are caused by persons having close contact with certain types of reptiles or amphibians.

Dr. Linda Capewell is an EIS Officer with CDC's Division of Foodborne and Mycotic Diseases. She's joining us today to discuss ways to prevent becoming infected with *salmonella*. Welcome to the show, Linda.

[Dr. Capewell] Thank you.

[Dr. Gaynes] Linda, what animals are most likely to transmit *salmonella* to humans?

[Dr. Capewell] Animals to remember are birds, especially young birds or chicks; reptiles, like turtles and snakes; and especially amphibians, such as frogs, which was the case in our most recent *salmonella* outbreak.

[Dr. Gaynes] What types of interactions with these animals can lead to *salmonella*?

[Dr. Capewell] Well, there's two types of interactions to be concerned about. First is when people are coming in contact with a reptile or a frog, especially in young children. They're either putting it up to their mouth or they're just not washing their hands properly after contacting these animals. The second is when people tend to wash these aquariums in the kitchen and as a result, they're contaminating their food in these food prep areas.

[Dr. Gaynes] If a person has one of these animals as a pet, what precautions should they take to avoid *salmonella* infection?

[Dr. Capewell] Well it's really best to keep young children under five away from these types of animals or their habitats, as well as those with weakened immune systems, because they're more likely to become seriously infected with this illness. And also, for those that do have these animals in their homes, it's important to remember to wash your hands really well after touching a reptile or frog or touching their environment or habitat. And also, for those people that have these animals in their homes, we recommend that you wash the aquarium or tank outside the

home, and especially not in a food prep area like your kitchen sink because you can contaminate your food.

[Dr. Gaynes] What are the symptoms of *salmonella*?

[Dr. Capewell] So most people infected with salmonella have diarrhea, fever, and stomach pain and it usually develops within 12 hours to three days after they are infected with *salmonella*.

[Dr. Gaynes] How is the condition treated?

[Dr. Capewell] Most people can recover without treatment but for those that have severe infections, they may have to be hospitalized and if so, they'll probably have to be treated with IV fluids and antibiotics.

[Dr. Gaynes] Linda, where can listeners get more information about *salmonella* and ways to prevent it?

[Dr. Capewell] They can go to our website at [www.cdc.gov/salmonella](http://www.cdc.gov/salmonella).

[Dr. Gaynes] Thanks Linda. I've been talking today with CDC's Dr. Linda Capewell about ways to avoid becoming infected with *salmonella*.

Remember, if you have a reptile or amphibian as a pet or come in contact with one anywhere, practicing basic hygiene techniques can decrease your chances of becoming infected with *salmonella*.

Until next time, be well. This is Dr. Robert Gaynes for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or call 1-800-CDC-INFO, 24/7.