



## Feline Forum

Courtesy of:

### Salmonellosis in Cats

It's not surprising that cats can become infected with salmonella since there are almost two thousand different serotypes of the bacteria. Fortunately, cats are relatively resistant to salmonella infections unless they are stressed by overcrowding, dietary changes, transport, hospitalization, antimicrobial therapy, or concurrent illness at the time of salmonella exposure.

The source of the bacteria can be contaminated food or water dishes, or areas infected animals have contacted. Outdoor or indoor/outdoor cats have opportunity for exposure through hunting, exposure to garbage, and contact with the feces of infected animals. Infected cats are not always sick, yet still shed salmonella organisms in their feces.

Even though salmonellosis is caused by bacteria, antimicrobial therapy is usually not the first choice of treatment. The reason for the hesitancy in using such medications is the risk of producing drug-resistant salmonellae, and concern that the medication may destroy the normal intestinal bacteria that serve to protect the cat from harmful micro-organisms.

Salmonellosis is a public health concern since it can be transmitted to cat owners by infected cats.

### Removing Cat Odors

Cat odors can be safely eliminated from the house by using these simple procedures when cleaning:

Use a diluted chlorine bleach (4 ounces of bleach to one gallon of water) solution to help neutralize odors and disinfect litter boxes.

Treat urine-stained carpets immediately with a deodorizer and cleaning solution. If the padding underneath is soiled, it must be removed. If the stain occurs on concrete, clean the surface and then apply a sealer to the concrete.

### Holiday Treats

There is always a temptation to share holiday goodies with pets, and probably a greater temptation to feed table scraps to pets. However, a cat's digestive system is finely tuned to a carnivorous diet, and feeding foods the cat is not used to receiving can cause vomiting or diarrhea. Healthier alternatives to rich holiday foods from the table are cat treats that can be purchased from a pet or grocery store. However, even these should be rationed since they often do not provide a nutritionally balanced and complete diet.

If you would like more information on how to feed your cat, ask your veterinarian for the brochure, *Feeding Your Cat*, published by the Cornell Feline Health Center.

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