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## **Pet Food Recalls**

There have been 11 pet food recalls since March of this year because of Salmonella. Most of these recalls were pet foods manufactured by Diamond Pet Foods, but they also included fish flakes as well as rat and hamster food from different manufacturers.

### **What is Salmonella?**

Salmonella is a bacterial food borne illness. This food poisoning causes hundreds of human deaths every year. Salmonella illness signs in people can include diarrhea, fever and abdominal cramping. These symptoms can last up to a week. Children, elderly and people with medical conditions that have a weak immune system are at highest risk of severe disease. Most pets will show minor signs, if they have Salmonella. These will usually resolve on their own and may include: fever, lethargy, inappetance, dehydration, diarrhea, straining to defecate, weight loss, and abdominal pain. Puppies and Kittens along with senior pets can have more severe signs.

### **How do People Get Salmonella?**

Salmonella infections usually occur in people after handling infected food or contacting the pet eating the food. Salmonella can be passed from pets to people. Pets can pass Salmonella in their feces, and humans can contact the bacteria when cleaning the yard. If you feed your pet in areas where the family eats, the bacteria can easily be spread. Pet food dishes can harbor Salmonella bacteria as well.

### **How is Salmonella Prevented?**

Children, elderly or immune-compromised people should not handle pet food. Food dishes should be washed regularly and feeding should not occur in the kitchen where human food is prepared. Washing hands with soap and water after feeding, picking up stool and handling the pet is very important. Feeding a raw food diet comes with a high risk of Salmonella. It is best to cook any food to minimize food poisoning to your pet and transmission to people.

### **How to I find out about food recalls?**

The FDA keeps a list of current recalled foods. This list can be found at the following link: <http://www.fda.gov/safety/recalls>, you can sort by “Animal Health”. Some manufacturers will also set up websites for more information on recalled foods. At The Zimmerman Veterinary Clinic we post any food recalls to our clinic Facebook, and we also call clients directly if a recalled food is sold by us. In addition, most food bags should have a phone number to call with any questions.

Disclaimer: This written content is meant to be educational and is not medical advice. Always consult a veterinarian about medical advice for your pet.