

STATE OF COLORADO

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Dedicated to protecting and improving the health and environment of the people of Colorado

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Colorado Department
of Public Health
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Information for Alamosa Residents about Salmonella Infection

Recently, many residents of Alamosa have had intestinal infections due to a bacterium called *Salmonella*. A bottled water advisory for Alamosa residents was announced March 19. Details about the advisory can be found at: www.cdphe.state.co.us/epr/alamosa.html.

If you have questions about salmonella infection or the bottled water advisory, please call CO-HELP (1-877-462-2911), a hotline sponsored by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

- Usually, persons with *Salmonella* infection have diarrhea (often with blood), fever and stomach cramps. Illness starts 12 to 72 hours after exposure and may last 2 to 7 days.
- Most recover without medical treatment. **Usually, antibiotics do not help.** For a few persons, the diarrhea has been severe enough to require hospital treatment. Infants, the elderly, and persons with impaired immune systems may have more severe illnesses.
- **Drinking extra fluids does help.** Most children and healthy adults with diarrhea as part of the Alamosa outbreak should be able to remain at home and may not need to see a health care provider. The important goal is to prevent dehydration from the diarrhea.
- To prevent dehydration, drink a rehydration solution (such as Pedialyte) or drink soups alternating with fruit juice. **Drink a cup or more of liquid for each large, loose stool.** Avoid soda pop and sports drinks which contain too much sugar and not enough salt.
- To reduce fever and pain, try acetaminophen (such as Tylenol) according to instructions on the label. Taking medicines to stop the diarrhea is not routinely recommended.
- Infants under 3 months of age, the elderly or frail and people with underlying illnesses are more likely to require medical care. Persons who feel they are seriously ill or who are worsening despite home treatment may need urgent care such as intravenous fluids, and should see a healthcare provider.
- Wash hands often and apply hand sanitizer after washing.
- People who have diarrhea should not prepare food for others until the diarrhea is over for at least one day.
- Food handlers who have diarrhea should inform their supervisors and should not handle or prepare food until the diarrhea is over for at least one day.

March 21, 2008