

# EASTER FOOD SAFETY RISKS

## HANDLING CHICKS AND DUCKLINGS CAN LEAD TO SALMONELLA, RAW EGGS LINKED TO OUTBREAKS

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Handwashing after handling animals, even cute ones, reduces risk of illness. Children can get sick by touching birds and then putting their hands directly in their mouths or touching food.

### CHICK RISKS

The US CDC reported this month that 96 cases of salmonellosis were linked to the handling of young poultry in the summer of 2011.

Most patients reported purchasing chicks or ducklings from a national agricultural feed store chain that was supplied by a single mail-order hatchery.

Since 1990, 35 outbreaks of human *Salmonella* infections linked to contact with live poultry have been reported.

Use food grade dye if coloring eggs. If boiled eggs are used for an egg hunt it is best to not consume as the shells may crack allowing bacteria to enter. If dyed eggs are to be consumed, keep them below 41F after boiling and dyeing and don't leave them unrefrigerated for more than 4hrs.

### EGG RISKS

In 2011, deserts produced by a Rhode Island bakery were linked to 56 illnesses and one death. The Rhode Island Department of Health pointed to cross-contamination with raw eggs as a likely source of contamination. Pastries were also stored in crates where broken eggs had been held.

Undercooked or raw eggs have been linked to multiple *Salmonella* outbreaks including 22 illnesses in Australia in early 2012 and over 200 illnesses in the UK in June 2011.

- Eggs can carry *Salmonella* and need to be cooked to 145 °F for 15 seconds to reduce risk, or until the yolk sets.
- Raw shell eggs should be stored in the refrigerator held at or below 45 °F.
- Use pasteurized eggs as a replacement in raw egg dishes to reduce risks.

