

FDA Cautions Pet Owners Not to Feed One Lot of Hare Today Gone Tomorrow Due to *Salmonella* and *Listeria monocytogenes*

This posting was updated on January 31, 2019, to include more information about FDA sample testing.

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Fast Facts

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- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is cautioning pet owners not to feed Hare Today Gone Tomorrow Ground Chicken/Bones/Organs, lot 12.04.2018, after the product tested positive for *Salmonella* and *Listeria monocytogenes* (*L. mono*). This product is identified as “Ground Chicken” on the product labeling and as “Ground Chicken/Bones/Organs” on the firm’s website.
- If you have this lot of Hare Today Gone Tomorrow Ground Chicken/Bones/Organs, throw it away.
- *Salmonella* and *L. mono* can affect both human and animal health. People with symptoms of *Salmonella* or *L. mono* infections should consult their health care providers. Consult a veterinarian if your pet has symptoms of *Salmonella* or *L. mono* infection.

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What is the problem?

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is cautioning pet owners not to feed Hare Today Gone Tomorrow Ground Chicken/Bones/Organs, lot 12.04.2018, after a sample of the product collected by the FDA tested positive for *Salmonella* and *Listeria monocytogenes* (*L. mono*). The product is available in four sizes and varieties, all with the processing date of 12.04.2018 on the back of the bag:

- Ground Chicken/Bones/Organs, 1lb, Fine Ground
- Ground Chicken/Bones/Organs, 2lb, Fine Ground
- Ground Chicken/Bones/Organs, 3lb, Coarse Ground
- Ground Chicken/Bones/Organs, 5lb, Fine Ground

The FDA collected this sample while following up on a consumer complaint in which a kitten became sick with *Salmonella* after eating the recalled product. The specific lot of Hare Today Gone Tomorrow Ground Chicken/Bones/Organs that the sick kitten ate was not available for testing. The FDA collected samples from lot 12.04.2018, which tested positive for both *Salmonella* and *L. mono*. Although the *Salmonella* isolated from the feces of the sick kitten did not match the strain found in the product sample, Federal law requires that all pet food not be contaminated with pathogens, including *Salmonella* and *L. mono*, because of the potential impact on human and animal health.

The FDA collected, secured, transported, and processed these samples according to the agency's [Investigations Operations Manual](#). The FDA investigator aseptically collected a sample consisting of ten subsamples of unopened packages of HTGT at random from lot 12.04.2018. Each of the unopened subsamples was placed in a secure container and taped shut by the investigator. The investigator also provided two controls to be tested by the laboratory to verify that there was no cross-contamination. The sample (consisting of the ten subsamples) was sent frozen and received by the lab frozen. The FDA laboratory that processed the samples is accredited for technical competence in Chemical and Biological testing in accordance with the recognized international standard ISO/IEC 17025:2005 *General Requirements for the Competence of Testing and Calibration Laboratories*.

One composite sample of HTGT lot 12.04.2018 tested positive for *Salmonella* and an additional composite sample of HTGT lot 12.04.2018 tested positive for *L. mono*. It is not unusual for other samples in a positive lot to test negative, even when pathogens exist elsewhere in the lot. This is because pathogens are rarely distributed evenly throughout the product, even when mixed well. As seen in numerous other food contamination incidents investigated by the FDA, pathogens may exist in "pockets," even within the same container of product. If even one sample of a lot is found to contain pathogens, the FDA considers the entire lot to be adulterated.

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Why is the FDA issuing this alert?

The FDA is issuing this alert because Hare Today Gone Tomorrow Ground Chicken/Bones/Organs, lot 12.04.2018, represents a serious threat to human and animal health and is adulterated under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act because it contains *Salmonella* and *L. mono*. The FDA continues to work with Hare Today Gone Tomorrow on recalling its Ground Chicken/Bones/Organs, lot 12.04.2018.

What do I need to do?

If you have Hare Today Gone Tomorrow Ground Chicken/Bones/Organs, lot 12.04.2018, stop feeding it to your pets and throw it away in a secure container where other animals, including wildlife, cannot access it. Consumers who have had this product in their homes should [clean refrigerators/freezers where the product was stored](#) and clean and disinfect all bowls, utensils, food prep surfaces, pet bedding, toys, floors, and any other surfaces that the food or pet may have had contact with. Clean up the pet's feces in yards or parks where people or other animals may become exposed.

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What is *Salmonella* and what are the symptoms of *Salmonella* infection?

Salmonella is a bacterium that can cause illness and death in humans and animals, especially those who are very young, very old, or have weak immune systems. According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC), people infected with *Salmonella* can develop diarrhea, fever and abdominal cramps. Most people recover without treatment, but in some people, the diarrhea may be so severe that they need to be hospitalized. In these patients, the *Salmonella* infection may spread from the intestines to the blood stream and then to other body sites unless the person is treated promptly with antibiotics. Consult your health care provider if you have symptoms of *Salmonella* infection.

Pets do not always display symptoms when infected with *Salmonella*, but signs can include vomiting, diarrhea (which may be bloody), fever, loss of appetite and/or decreased activity level. If your pet has these symptoms, consult a veterinarian promptly. You should also be aware that infected pets can shed the bacteria in their feces without showing signs of being sick.

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What are the symptoms of *L. mono* infection (listeriosis)?

According to [CDC](#), listeriosis can cause a variety of symptoms, depending on the person and the part of the body affected.

Pregnant women: Pregnant women typically experience only fever and other flu-like symptoms, such as fatigue and muscle aches. However, infections during pregnancy can lead to miscarriage, stillbirth, premature delivery, or life-threatening infection of the newborn.

People other than pregnant women: Symptoms can include headache, stiff neck, confusion, loss of balance, and convulsions in addition to fever and muscle aches.

People with invasive listeriosis, a more serious form of the disease, usually report symptoms starting 1 to 4 weeks after eating food contaminated with *Listeria*; some people have reported symptoms starting as late as 70 days after exposure or as early as the same day of exposure. Listeriosis is treated with antibiotics.

Pregnant women and their newborns, adults age 65 and older, and people with weakened immune systems are [more likely to get sick](#) with listeriosis. Anyone with symptoms of listeriosis should contact a health care provider.

L. mono infections are uncommon in pets, but they are possible. Symptoms may include mild to severe diarrhea; anorexia; fever; nervous, muscular and respiratory signs; abortion; depression; shock; and death. Pets do not need to display symptoms to be able to pass *L. mono* on to their human companions. Once *L. mono* gets established in the pet's gastrointestinal tract, the animal can shed the bacteria when it has a bowel movement, and the contamination may continue to spread. If your pet has these symptoms, consult a veterinarian promptly.

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Why is the FDA concerned about *Salmonella* and *L. mono* in pet food?

Pet foods contaminated with pathogens such as *Salmonella* and *L. mono* are of particular public health importance because they can affect both human and animal health. Pets can get sick from *Salmonella* and *L. mono*, and may also be carriers of the bacteria and pass it onto their human companions without appearing to be ill. The FDA is aware of recent cases in which humans and/or animals have gotten sick from exposure to contaminated pet foods ([Salmonella-human cases](#), [Salmonella-kitten](#), [Salmonella-kitten, dog](#)).

Once *Salmonella* and/or *L. mono* get established in the pet's gastrointestinal tract, the animal can shed the bacteria when it has a bowel movement, and the contamination will continue to spread. Because animals can shed the bacteria when they have bowel movements, it's particularly important to clean up the animal's feces in yards or parks where people or other animals may become exposed, in addition to cleaning items in the home.

Federal law, including the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, requires that all pet food not be contaminated with pathogens, including *Salmonella* and *L. mono*. Pet food manufacturers must effectively manage sourcing of ingredients, processing and packing to control pathogens. Without an effective control, such as cooking, raw pet food is more likely than other types of pet food to contain pathogens such as *Salmonella* and *L. mono*. Refrigeration or freezing does not kill the bacteria. Pet owners who choose to feed raw pet food [should be aware of the risks](#) associated with these products.

The FDA is the Federal agency that regulates pet food, while the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulates meat and poultry for human consumption. USDA-regulated raw meat and poultry products are intended to be cooked and carry instructions to cook the product to a safe temperature. However, raw pet food products are intended to be served without further cooking, which creates a potential health hazard for people and pets exposed to the product.

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How can I report a pet illness?

People who think their pets have become ill after consuming contaminated pet food should first contact their veterinarians. Veterinarians who wish to have pets tested for *Salmonella* may do so through the [Vet-LIRN Network](#) if the pet is from a household with a person infected with *Salmonella*. Veterinarians who wish to have pets tested for other pathogens when there is an associated human case may also contact Vet-LIRN.

The FDA encourages consumers to report complaints about this and other pet food products electronically through the [Safety Reporting Portal](#) or by calling their state's [FDA Consumer Complaint Coordinators](#).