

PRESS RELEASE

Massachusetts cases of Salmonella linked to dog treats

Consumers advised to dispose of “Dog Gone Dog Treats” to prevent illness

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Department of Public Health

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BOSTON — The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) is advising consumers who have any Dog Gone Dog Treats to dispose of them. There have been three cases of salmonellosis (infection with the *Salmonella* bacteria) linked to individuals handling these dog treats. The cases include two adults in their 70s and a child; all are residents of Essex County. One open bag from a customer and several unopened bags purchased last week all tested positive for *Salmonella* at the State Public Health Laboratory.

Dog Gone Dog Treats are made in Georgetown, include “chicken chips” and beef liver and sweet potato chips, and are sold at Essex County Co-Op in Topsfield, New England Dog Biscuit Company in Salem, Gimme Chews & Moore in Haverhill, and Animal Crackers in Gloucester. These treats are dehydrated and are not fully cooked.

All stores have been ordered to remove any existing product from their shelves and no additional product is currently being made. People get *Salmonella* if they eat or handle food that has been contaminated with the bacteria and the food has not been properly handled, prepared, or cooked. *Salmonella* is common in uncooked food products from animals, such as eggs, poultry, and unpasteurized milk. People who get the germs on their hands can infect themselves by eating, smoking, or touching their mouths. They can also spread the germs to anyone or anything they touch, including food.

Most people with an infection will have diarrhea, fever, and stomach cramps that can last up to a week; severe disease is possible but uncommon. Although treatment is not always necessary, people who have weakened immune systems, very young children, adults over 65, and those experiencing severe symptoms should talk to their healthcare providers about treatment. Individuals should consult with their healthcare provider if they have symptoms after contact with the dog treats or an animal that has eaten the dog treats.

Dogs that become ill from *Salmonella* infection may experience diarrhea that can contain blood or mucus, may seem more tired than usual, and may have a fever or vomit. It is also possible for dogs to have *Salmonella* infection and not appear sick. Those concerned that their dogs may have become ill after eating the treats should consult their veterinarians.

The best way to prevent *Salmonella* infection from pet food or treats is to:

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water right after handling pet food or treats or having contact with animal feces (stool), especially before preparing, serving, or eating foods or drinks, or before preparing baby bottles.
- Store pet food and treats away from where human food is stored or prepared, and away from young children.
- Children under 5 should not touch or eat pet food or treats.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces that the pet treats may have touched. *Salmonella* can survive several weeks in dry environments.
- Don't let your dog lick your mouth and face after eating. If you do, wash your hands and any other parts of your body they may have licked with soap and water.
- The CDC does not recommend feeding raw diets to pets as they have been found to contain germs, including *Salmonella*, that can make pets and humans sick.

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