



## KANE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT MEDIA ADVISORY

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### ***Kane sees rise in Salmonella cases***

Kane County will be implementing a countywide food safety program as a way to protect the public. The program is the result of an increase in the number of a specific type of Salmonella infection, Salmonella species serotype Newport. Kane usually sees an average of 4 cases of this specific type each year, compared to this year's total case count to date of 21.

Salmonella bacteria of all types cause much of the food poisoning in the world, including an estimated four million cases of Salmonellosis in the United States each year. In Illinois about 1,500 to 2,500 cases of this foodborne illness are reported each year. The source or cause of the majority of these cases may never be determined. That is why it is important for the public to take steps to protect themselves and their families.

Foods most commonly associated with Salmonella food poisoning include meats, poultry, dairy products, fruits and vegetables. People are far more likely to contract Salmonellosis at home than in a restaurant or from the grocery store, so be sure to handle food safely:

- Hands should be washed thoroughly before and after handling food.
- All meats and eggs should be thoroughly cooked
- All food preparation surfaces should be cleaned. Avoid cross-contamination by using different utensils, plates, cutting boards and counter tops before and after cooking.
- All fruits and vegetables should be thoroughly washed before preparing and eating.

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The health department is asking people displaying the symptoms, which include headaches, muscle aches, diarrhea, vomiting, rumblings in the bowels, chills, fever, nausea and dehydration, to see their doctor.

A person may contract Salmonellosis many times in his or her life and not always recognize it. Often it is mistaken for the “stomach flu.” Symptoms, which last from 24 hours to 12 days, usually appear six to 72 hours after ingestion, but people can carry salmonella and exhibit no symptoms. Children younger than 1 year old, people who have had ulcer surgery or take antacids and those whose immune systems have been weakened by other ailments are most susceptible.

Salmonellosis is seldom fatal (the fatality rate is less than 1 percent). Two or three weeks after being infected with salmonella, one in 10,000 cases develops reactive arthritis or Reiter's syndrome as a complication. These patients also may develop an inflammation of the urethra and eyes.

The health department has mounted a bilingual countywide campaign to educate the public about safe food handling methods as a way to prevent foodborne illnesses.

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