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## Salmonella Sources in the Home

Gina Pugliese, RN, MS  
Martin S. Favero, PhD

To explore the role of foods and the home environment in the development of *Salmonella* infections in infants and children, researchers from the Arkansas Childrens Hospital, Little Rock, conducted home investigations of patients younger than 4 years of age infected with *Salmonella*.

A total of 526 cultures from 50 homes were obtained from foods (120); household members (73); refrigerators (52); water (47); countertops (46); soil (42); can openers (36); vacuum cleaners (34); animals,

pets, insects (26); and others (50). Isolates with a serotype identical to those in the index patient were found in 16 homes, 3 of which included an isolate of a second serotype, and an isolate of a different serotype was recovered in 3 homes. The pulsed-field gel electrophoresis patterns of the isolates of identical serotypes from the subjects and from their environment were indistinguishable in all but two patients. Among isolates of the same serotype encountered in different homes, all patterns were different. The identical serotype was found in multiple locations (4); dirt surrounding front doors (4); household members

(3); vacuum cleaner (1); animals, pets, insects (1); and a refrigerator shelf (1).

The authors noted that these data illustrate the importance of the child's environment in the development of salmonellosis and suggest that clinicians concentrate on educating the parents about the environmental spread of *Salmonella*. Contaminated foods in the home play a less significant role in the infection of infants and children.

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