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### **Tips for Safely Handling Pet Food**

*Follow these guidelines when handling pet food and treats to help prevent a Salmonella infection*

Pet food and treats often contain harmful germs, including *Salmonella*. Consumers are encouraged to use the following guidelines when handling pet foods and treats to minimize the risk of becoming ill.

#### **Preparation:**

- Wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and water right after handling pet food and treats, and especially before preparing, serving or eating food, drinks or preparing baby bottles.
- Feed your pet in areas other than the kitchen.
- Wash pet food bowls, dishes and scooping utensils with soap and hot water regularly. Avoid washing items in the kitchen sink or bathtubs to prevent cross-contamination. In households where there is no alternative, the sink area should be adequately sanitized after these items have been cleaned and removed.
- Infants should not be bathed in kitchen sinks because of the risk of cross-contamination.
- Do not use the pet's feeding bowl as a scooping utensil – use a clean, dedicated scoop.

#### **Storage:**

- Pet food should not be handled or stored in areas where human food is prepared.
- Store dry pet food in its original bag inside a clean, dedicated plastic container with a lid, keeping the top of the bag folded or closed.
- Promptly refrigerate or discard unused, leftover wet pet food and containers.
- Dry pet food and pet treats should be stored in a cool, dry place under 80 degrees F.

#### **Prevent getting *Salmonella* from your pet:**

- After contact with animals, their food, or environments, wash your hands with soap and running water.
- Clean up after your pet. Scoop the litter box daily and dispose of the waste in a tightly sealed plastic bag. If you have a dog, clean up the waste daily and dispose of in a tightly sealed plastic bag.
- Children younger than 5 years of age should not be allowed to touch pet food, treats, or supplements and should be kept away from pet feeding areas.