

Risk of getting sick from fostering ducklings in Toronto

Toronto Public Health is receiving reports that some residents are fostering ducklings during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, ducklings, chickens, and other poultry can sometimes carry harmful germs such as E. coli, Campylobacter, Salmonella and various parasites. In the United States, the CDC has reported outbreaks of Salmonella in several states among people fostering ducklings.

Please be aware that [Toronto bylaws prohibit the ownership](#) (including temporary fostering) of poultry animals, including ducklings, within the city area with the exception of the [UrbanHensTO Pilot Program](#).

To prevent the risk of getting sick from backyard poultry:

- Always [wash your hands](#) with soap and water right after handling live poultry, their eggs, or anything in the environment where they live and roam. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water are not readily available.
- Parents should monitor children's interactions with poultry as well as supervise handwashing and hygiene practices for young children.
- Clean and sanitize surfaces in areas the poultry interact with throughout the day, and regularly remove waste in a manner that prevents the spread of germs.
- Do not snuggle or kiss poultry, touch your mouth, or eat and drink around poultry.
- Avoid having poultry in the kitchen, the dining room, or wherever food is prepared and consumed.
- Immunocompromised people, pregnant women, and infants or children under the age of five should avoid touching or feeding poultry.

If experiencing diarrhea or vomiting after coming into contact with live poultry, please seek medical attention immediately.

Further resources:

Toronto Public Health; [Backyard Poultry](#)

US CDC, [Backyard Poultry](#)

Public Health Ontario; [Reducing Health Risks Associated with Backyard Chickens](#)