



Dear Colleague:

As you know, foodborne illness, sometimes called food poisoning, is a common, costly—yet preventable—public health problem. Each year, eating contaminated food causes 1 in 6 people in the United States to get sick, 128,000 to go to the hospital, and kills 3,000. Foodborne illness can be as commonplace as self-limited diarrhea or as life-threatening as organ failure.

Each month, CDC *Vital Signs* reports on a single, compelling public health topic. This month, *Vital Signs* summarizes 2010 [FoodNet](#) surveillance data and describes trends since 1996 for laboratory-confirmed infections of pathogens transmitted commonly through food. The messages of this report are that preventing these infections is possible. In the past 15 years, there has been an overall 23% decrease in the incidence of infection with six key foodborne pathogens, led by an almost 50% decline in *E.coli* O157 infection. In contrast, no progress has been made in reducing *Salmonella*, which causes more than 1 million people in the United States to get sick each year. *Salmonella* also causes the most hospitalizations and deaths and \$365 million in annual direct medical costs. We can make food safer— from the farm to the table— by applying our success in reducing *E. coli* O157 infections to *Salmonella* and other common pathogens. But we need your help.

The *MMWR* report emphasizes that interventions to reduce contamination in foods can work. One of the main lessons learned in reducing *E. coli* O157 was that it took strong and specific action from many partners in food safety, which is why we are reaching out to you to help us spread the word.

CDC's partnerships are essential to our efforts of reducing contamination from the farm to the table. But CDC *Vital Signs* is not just about data—it is about action. Smart investment in food safety should explicitly target *Salmonella* and other high priority food-related infections and directly accelerate effective public health interventions at the local, national, and global levels. We look forward to working with our partners in public health to develop further improvements toward the ultimate goal of reducing foodborne infections.

The *MMWR* and other materials are available at www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns. We've attached some information below which might be useful should you want to develop your own materials. You can also visit <http://www.cdc.gov/SocialMedia/Tools/ContentSyndication.html> to obtain additional information or to request additional pages to be syndicated. You can also have *Vital Signs* sent directly to your own Web site to display through our content syndication.

Please mark your calendars and join us for the CDC *Vital Signs* Town Hall teleconference, "[Foodborne Illness: Common, Costly...Preventable](#)," on Tuesday, June 14, 2011 from 2pm–3pm EST. We hope that you will find the *MMWR* report and accompanying materials helpful in your work toward the reduction of foodborne illness. CDC's multidisciplinary experts in food safety are here to support your efforts every step of the way.

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Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



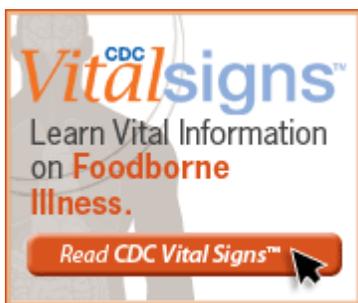
To add this button, copy this code and paste into your website, blog or social networking profile:

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<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/FoodSafety/?s_cid=vitalsigns_069" title="CDC Vital Signs&trade; &mdash; Make Food Safer to Eat. Clean - Separate - Cook - Chill"></a>
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To add this banner, copy this code and paste into your website, blog or social networking profile:

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<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/FoodSafety/?s_cid=vitalsigns_070" title="1 in 6 people gets food poisoning. CDC Vital Signs&trade;:; www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns"></a>
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To add this banner, copy this code and paste into your website, blog or social networking profile:

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> <a href="http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/FoodSafety/?s_cid=vitalsigns_067" title="CDC Vital Signs&trade; &and; Learn Vital Information on Foodborne Illness. Read Vital Signs&trade;&hellip;"></a>
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Content Syndication

Vital Signs pages are also available through CDC's Content Syndication, an application that enables partner organizations to display current CDC health and safety information. It is a no cost, minimal maintenance solution that allows you to keep content up-to-date. To syndicate the Vital Signs information, simply select "Syndicate Page" from the right navigation and you will be directed to the Content Syndication site for additional instructions, including the option to self register if you have not previously.

Visit <http://www.cdc.gov/SocialMedia/Tools/ContentSyndication.html> to obtain additional information on content syndication self registration, page selection process or to request additional pages to be syndicated.