Tips for Keeping People and Pets Healthy and Safe from Germs in Pet Food

Did you know that pet food, pet treats, and nutritional supplements for pets can become contaminated with harmful germs that can make people and pets sick? Pets that eat contaminated food can carry germs even if they appear healthy, and those germs can make you and your family sick.

One type of germ that can make both pets and people sick is *Salmonella*. These germs can cause diarrhea in people, which can be mild, severe, or even life-threatening. Children under 5 years old, elderly individuals, and people with weakened immune systems are especially at high risk for getting very sick from these germs.

SIMPLE STEPS TO PROTECT YOU, YOUR FAMILY, *and* YOUR PETS

1. **WASH YOUR HANDS** with soap and water immediately after touching animals and their food, toys, waste, or areas where they sleep and play. This is especially important before touching your own food or preparing baby bottles.

2. **KEEP YOUNG CHILDREN AWAY FROM PET FOOD** and pet feeding areas to reduce their chances for getting sick or injured.

3. **BUY SAFE PET FOOD** with no visible signs of damage to the packaging.

4. **AVOID FEEDING PETS RAW DIETS** or any other raw foods that have not been appropriately treated to eliminate disease-causing germs.

5. **KEEP PET FOOD AWAY FROM "PEOPLE" FOOD.** Try not to store pet food or feed your pet in the kitchen or in any area where human food is stored or prepared.

6. **REFRIGERATE UNUSED WET FOOD.** To prevent germs from growing in wet pet food, promptly cover and refrigerate any unused wet pet food, and throw away leftover food that your pet did not eat during that meal.

7. **WASH PET FOOD BOWLS AND UTENSILS REGULARLY.** To prevent cross-contamination indoors, try to avoid washing them in kitchen or bathroom sinks or bathtubs.

8. **CLEAN UP YOUR PET'S WASTE** and remember to wash your hands right afterwards. Pet's waste can contain germs. People at high risk for getting very sick from these germs should not clean up after pets.

For more information, call **1-800-CDC-INFO** or visit
http://www.cdc.gov/Features/SalmonellaDryPetFood