

# People picking up infection from pet store puppies' poop: CDC

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(HealthDay)—Bacterial infections that have sickened 39 people in seven

states have been linked to puppies sold through Petland, a national pet store chain, U.S. health officials say.

Campylobacter infections have been reported between September 2016 and August 2017 in Florida, Kansas, Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Wisconsin, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Nine people have been hospitalized. No deaths have been reported.

"Evidence suggests that puppies sold through Petland are a likely source of this outbreak," according to a CDC news release. "Petland is cooperating with public health and animal [health officials](#) to address this outbreak."

Campylobacter is a bacteria that causes people to develop diarrhea (sometimes bloody), cramping, abdominal pain, and fever within two to five days of exposure to the organism, said Dr. Sophia Jan, director of general pediatrics at Cohen Children's Medical Center, in New Hyde Park, N.Y.

This is a common cause of diarrhea in the United States, she said.

"The illness typically lasts about a week without treatment," Jan said. But for people with compromised immune systems, [campylobacter infections](#) can be life threatening, she added.

Most cases in humans occur from eating raw or undercooked chicken, or eating foods that have been cross contaminated by infected poultry products, Jan noted.

However, humans can get infected from contact with the stool of an infected puppy, she added.

Twelve of the people sickened in this outbreak were Petland employees in four states. The other 27 had either bought a Petland puppy, shopped at Petland or visited someone who had purchased a puppy from Petland, the CDC report says.

Infected [dogs](#) may or may not show signs of illness, such as diarrhea, vomiting, or a fever, so it's important to take precautions when around dogs, the CDC says.

To prevent catching campylobacter from dogs, the CDC advises that you:

- Wash your hands thoroughly after touching dogs, their poop, or their food. Take extra care that children wash their hands carefully after playing with puppies or dogs.
- Pick up and dispose of dog poop, especially in areas where children might play.
- Contact your veterinarian if you notice any signs of illness in your puppy or dog.

**More information:** Sophia Jan, M.D., director, general pediatrics, Cohen Children's Medical Center, New Hyde Park, N.Y.; U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, news release, Sept. 11, 2017

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more on [campylobacter](#).

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