

BABY CHICK CARE

First Day Care

- Upon taking your chicks home, give them access to warm drinking water (98°) as soon as possible. Keep their water warm for 2 days. To ensure that chicks are drinking, gently dip their beaks into their water source.
- Ensure the chicks have a brooding area that is initially heated to about 105°F, then lower the temperature to 95-96° F over the next few hours.
- We recommend 1 red heat lamp with a 100 watt bulb placed 1-1.5 feet above brooding area per 25 chicks.
 - To raise or lower the temperature, simply raise or lower the heat lamp.
- Give chicks enough space (1/2 sq. foot per chick) to move away from the heating lamp(s) if necessary.
- Block corners of the pen with cardboard to make wider angles that are harder for chicks to fill up in.
- If chicks have had a hard trip and appear weak or lethargic, mix about 2 tablespoons sugar into 1 quart warm water. Change this mixture to regular water after 16 hours.
- To help chicks start eating, spread layers of newspaper around brooding area and sprinkle feed on top. Switch to regular chick feeder after one day.
- Use hay, straw, or wood shavings as bedding on the floor of the brooding area. Do NOT use sawdust, sand, or cedar chips/shavings.



Food

- Give chicks a starter/grower feed.
- Use an easily accessible, 1 ft. trough feeder or round feeder for every 25 chicks.
- Do not let chicks run out of feed.
- Chicks should stay on a starter/grower feed for about 5 months.
- For Jumbo Cornish Cross breed, take away feed at night starting on day 14. This will prevent potentially harmful accelerated development.

Water

- Chicks need continuous access to drinking water.
- Keep water warm (about 98°F) for the first 2 days.
- Do not medicate the drinking water.
- Use a 1-gallon waterer for every 25 chicks.

Heat

- The temperature of the surface in brooding area should be 95-98°F during the first week. Lower the temperature by 5° per week after that until you reach 70°F.
- Temperatures may need to be slightly higher for Bantam chicks.
- We recommend a safely secured drop light with reflector shield, along with a 100-watt bulb.
- Do NOT use a Teflon coated lamp, as this can result in toxic fumes.
- Use a thermometer to test the heat of surface of brooding area.
- Protect chicks from drafty air using a 1-ft. high draft shield.
- Provide 1/2 sq. ft. of space per chick.
- Heating may take daily adjustments. Watch chick behavior to judge whether or not an adjustment is necessary.

Health Tips

- Chicks will use their beaks to groom or pick themselves. However, occasionally pecking amongst chicks will become a problem if the brooding area is too hot or too crowded.
- To prevent excessive pecking, use a red tinted bulb to reduce brightness. Also, sprinkle grass clippings in their brooding area.
- Occasionally, the rear end of a chick will get manure stuck to it (“pasting up”). If you see this happen, wash the “paste” off with a cloth and warm water. This should last no more than a few days.

Protecting you and your family from Salmonella

What is Salmonella?

- Salmonella is a type of bacteria that is carried in the intestines of animals and can be shed into the environment.

How do people get Salmonella from poultry?

- People get sick from Salmonella by hand to mouth contact. Usually this happens when people handle birds or their droppings and then accidentally touch their mouths or forget to wash their hands before eating or drinking.

What kind of illness is caused by Salmonella?

- Salmonella can cause diarrhea, vomiting and fever. Occasionally people become sick enough to need to see a doctor or be hospitalized. People most susceptible include young children, pregnant women, the elderly, people on chemotherapy, diabetics and others with weakened immune systems.

How can salmonella infection be prevented?

- Do not let children less than five years of age or others at high risk handle poultry or items contaminated by poultry
- wash your hands thoroughly after handling poultry or their droppings.
- do not eat or drink around poultry or their living areas.
- do not let poultry live inside your home.
- do not wash the birds' food and water dishes in your kitchen sink.

For more information visit: www.cdc.gov/features/salmonellapoultry/index.html
For questions related to salmonella, contact your state's Department of Public Health.

