



TYPHOID FEVER

What is typhoid fever?

Typhoid fever is a life-threatening illness caused by *Salmonella* Typhi bacteria. Paratyphoid fever is a life-threatening illness caused by *Salmonella* Paratyphi bacteria.

Who gets typhoid fever?

Anyone can get typhoid fever, but the greatest risk exists to travelers visiting countries where the disease is common. Occasionally, U.S. cases can be traced to exposure to a person who is a chronic carrier. In the U.S., about 400 cases occur each year; most are acquired while traveling internationally.

How is typhoid fever spread?

These diseases are spread through sewage contamination of food or water and through person-to-person contact. Individuals who are currently ill and those who have recovered but are still passing the bacteria in their feces (stools) can spread *Salmonella* Typhi or *Salmonella* Paratyphi.

You can get typhoid fever or paratyphoid fever if:

- You eat food or drink a beverage that has been touched by a person who is shedding (getting rid of) *Salmonella* Typhi or *Salmonella* Paratyphi in their stools and who did not wash their hands thoroughly after going to the bathroom.
- Sewage contaminated with *Salmonella* Typhi or *Salmonella* Paratyphi gets into water you drink.
- Sewage contaminated with *Salmonella* Typhi or *Salmonella* Paratyphi gets into water used to rinse raw food that you eat.

What are the symptoms of typhoid fever?

Symptoms may be mild or severe and may include fever, headache, diarrhea, constipation, stomach pain, weakness, loss of appetite, and a rose-colored rash on the trunk of the body.

How soon do symptoms appear?

Symptoms usually start one to three weeks after swallowing the bacteria. However, symptoms may take as long as three months to appear.



Frequently Asked Questions

Should an infected person be excluded from work or school?

Since the bacteria is passed in the feces (stools) of infected people, only people with active diarrhea (loose stools) who are unable to control their bowel habits (for example, infants and certain individuals with access and functional needs) should be excluded from work or school.

Most infected people may return to work or school when they recover, as long as they carefully wash their hands after toilet use. Children in daycare and other sensitive situations should contact the Division of Public Health's Office of Infectious Disease Epidemiology at 1-888-295-5156 before returning to their routine activities. Food handlers may not return to work until three back-to-back negative stool sample are analyzed by a laboratory.

What is the treatment for typhoid fever?

Specific antibiotics, such as chloramphenicol, ampicillin, or ciprofloxacin are often used to treat cases of typhoid.

What can a person or community do to prevent the spread of typhoid fever?

A vaccine is available but is generally reserved for people traveling to underdeveloped countries where significant exposure may occur. Strict attention to food and water precautions while traveling to such countries is the most effective preventive method. To learn about travel advisories in other countries, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Travel Site: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>.

Resources

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <https://www.cdc.gov/typhoid-fever/index.html>