

Typhoid / Paratyphoid

FACT SHEET

What is Typhoid Fever?

Typhoid fever is a life-threatening illness caused by the bacteria *Salmonella Typhi*. The infection is spread directly from person to person or through contaminated food or water.

Who Can Get Typhoid Fever?

Anyone can get typhoid fever if they:

- Eat or drink contaminated food or liquids
- Are in close contact with another child or adult who has typhoid fever, such as a family member, daycare or a residential institution

Some infected persons (chronic carriers of the bacteria) may not show any symptoms, but can pass the bacteria in their bowel movements and urine for many years. Animals do not carry the bacteria.

What are the Symptoms?

- Fever
- Headache
- Red spots on the trunk of the body
- Slow heart rate
- Constipation more often than diarrhea

What is the Treatment?

Your doctor can prescribe an antibiotic to treat the disease. Persons given antibiotics usually begin to feel better within 2 to 3 days. People who do not get treatment may continue to have a fever for weeks or months, and as many as 20% may die.

How Can You Prevent Typhoid Fever?

This disease is seen mostly in travellers.

- Wash hands with soap and water after using the toilet, changing diapers, touching pets, and before and after handling foods
- Avoid unpasteurised milk or cheese
- Eat only well-cooked shellfish, wash hands after touching these uncooked foods
- Keep salads and cold foods refrigerated after preparation. Do not let food stand at room temperature
- Typhoid vaccine is recommended for people travelling to countries where there is a high risk of the disease
- When travelling to affected areas, take precautions to avoid contaminated food and water