



TYPHOID FEVER (*Salmonella Typhi*)

What is TYPHOID FEVER?

Typhoid fever is an infection of the intestinal tract and occasionally the bloodstream. It is caused by the bacteria, *Salmonella Typhi*. It is a rare disease with approximately 400 cases occurring annually in the United States. Most cases are acquired during travel to underdeveloped countries.

Who gets typhoid fever?

Anyone can get typhoid fever, but the risk is greatest among travelers visiting countries where the disease is common. Occasionally, local cases can be traced to exposure to a person who is a chronic carrier.

How is typhoid fever spread?

Salmonella Typhi is passed in the feces and, to some extent, the urine of infected people. The germs are spread by eating or drinking water or foods contaminated by feces from the infected individual.

What are the symptoms of typhoid fever?

Symptoms may be mild or severe and may include fever, headache, constipation or diarrhea, an enlarged spleen and liver, and, in some cases, rose-colored spots on the trunk.

How soon do symptoms appear?

Symptoms may appear from three to greater than 60 days after exposure, but usually in 8-14 days.

How long can an infected person carry the bacteria?

The carrier stage varies from a number of days to years. Only about 3 percent of cases go on to become lifelong carriers and this tends to occur more often in adults than in children.

How is typhoid fever treated?

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

Should infected people be isolated?

Only people with active diarrhea who are unable to control their bowels (e.g., infants, certain disabled individuals) should be isolated. Most infected people may return to work or school when they have recovered, provided they carefully wash hands after toilet use. Children in daycare and other sensitive situations must obtain approval from the Division of Public Health before returning to their routine activities. Food handlers and those who provide patient care may not return to work until three consecutive negative stool specimens are obtained.

Is there a vaccine for typhoid?

A vaccine is available but is generally reserved for people traveling to underdeveloped countries where significant exposure may occur. The most effective means of prevention is strict attention to food and water precautions when traveling to such countries.