

Typhoid General Information

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?

This disease is seen mostly in travellers, but 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 or someone in a 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?

- Adequately wash hands before preparing food and after handling raw meat, using the bathroom, changing diapers and handling garbage.
- Use a thermometer to ensure all foods have reached the [required internal cooking temperature](#) and reheat all food to an internal temperature of 74°C [165°F].
- Keep perishable food in a refrigerator at or below 4°C [40°F] and separate raw meat from ready-to-eat foods during thawing and storage.
- Wash raw fruits and vegetables thoroughly with clean, safe running water before you prepare and eat them.
- Drink water from a safe, treated water supply.

- Eat and drink only pasteurized juice, cider, milk and milk products.
- Avoid swallowing water if you are swimming or bathing in untreated water (natural swimming areas) and do not swim in pools or natural swimming areas if you have diarrhea.
- When travelling, in particular in developing countries or areas that are known to be affected, drink water (including ice) from a safe source. Eat only cooked hot food. Eat only fruit that can be peeled.
- Typhoid vaccine is recommended for people travelling to countries where there is a high risk of the disease.