

Questions and Answers about Typhoid Fever

Q What is Typhoid Fever?

A Typhoid Fever is an infection caused by the bacterial *Salmonella typhi*. This germ affects the intestinal tract and blood stream.

Q What are the signs and symptoms?

- A
- High fever (103° – 104°F)
 - Headache
 - Stomach pain
 - Diarrhea or constipation (very common)
 - Loss of appetite and severe weight loss
 - Weakness
 - Rash with flat rose-colored spots on people with pale skin

Some persons do not show any signs or symptoms and are called carriers.

Q How is Typhoid Fever spread?

A You can get Typhoid Fever if you eat food or drink liquids that have been contaminated by feces or urine from a person shedding the germ. If sewage containing the germ enters water used for drinking or washing food, the germ will spread.

In areas with poor sewage disposal and among people with poor hand washing, the germ is commonly spread by contaminated water and food. In urban areas, the spread occurs mostly through food contaminated by carriers who handle food without properly washing their hands. Flies may spread the germ from feces to food.

Q How can Typhoid Fever be treated?

- A
- Antibiotics,
 - Fluid replacement for the fever and diarrhea,
 - Small, frequent, high calorie (energy) meals,
 - Blood replacement if there is bleeding in stool (feces).

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Q How can you protect yourself from Typhoid Fever?

A When you travel to a country where Typhoid is common...

- **WASH YOUR HANDS WITH SOAP FIRST** for at least 20 seconds.
- Buy bottled water, but if you use tap water, bring it to a rolling boil for 1 minute before you drink it. Bottled carbonated water is safer than uncarbonated water.
- Ask for drinks without ice unless the ice is made from bottled or boiled water. Avoid Popsicles and flavored ices that may have been made with contaminated water.
- Eat foods that have been well cooked and that are still hot and steaming.
- Avoid raw vegetables and fruits that cannot be peeled. Vegetables like lettuce are easily contaminated and are very hard to wash well.
- Fruit and vegetables that can be peeled are safer than those that cannot be peeled. Peel them yourself and do not eat the peelings.
- Avoid foods and beverages from street vendors. It is difficult for food to be kept clean on the street, and many travelers get sick from food bought from street vendors.

Remember this advice when you travel: “Boil it, cook it, peel it, or forget it!”

Q What can be done to prevent Typhoid Fever?

- ### A
- If you are traveling to a country where Typhoid is common, you should consider being vaccinated against Typhoid. Visit your doctor or travel clinic to discuss your vaccination options.

11/00

Your local Public Health Center is:

