

Salmonella Typhi

What You Need to Know



WHAT IS SALMONELLA TYPHI?

Salmonella Typhi is a strain of bacteria that lives only in humans. It causes a bacterial infection of the intestinal tract and occasionally of the bloodstream (which is called typhoid fever). It is uncommon in the United States, with most cases acquired during foreign travel to developing countries.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF SALMONELLA TYPHI?

Symptoms of Salmonella Typhi infection typically start within 6 to 30 days after exposure but may take up to 60 days to develop. Symptoms often include:

- High fever
- Weakness
- Stomach pain
- Headache
- Constipation or diarrhea
- Cough
- Loss of appetite
- Flat, rose-colored spots/rash

If left untreated, life-threatening complications often develop.

HOW IS SALMONELLA TYPHI SPREAD?

Salmonella Typhi bacteria are shed in the urine or stool of infected persons. Salmonella Typhi is spread by eating or drinking contaminated food or water or by contact with stool from infected persons.

HOW LONG CAN AN INFECTED PERSON CARRY SALMONELLA TYPHI?

Even after treatment with antibiotics, a small number of people who recover from typhoid fever continue to hold the bacteria in their intestinal tracts or gallbladders, often for years. These people, called chronic carriers, shed the bacteria in their feces and are capable of infecting others, although they no longer have signs or symptoms of the disease themselves.

CAN TYPHOID FEVER BE TREATED?

Patients with symptoms of Salmonella Typhi infection should immediately seek medical attention. The infection can be effectively treated with antibiotics.

DO INFECTED PERSONS NEED TO BE ISOLATED OR EXCLUDED FROM WORK/SCHOOL?

Patients with Salmonella Typhi should be excluded from all work involving food handling, providing healthcare or caring for children until a doctor performs a series of stool cultures to ensure that no Salmonella Typhi bacteria remain in their body.

SHOULD CONTACTS OF INFECTED PERSONS BE TESTED?

Household and close contacts should be excluded from high-risk occupations (i.e., food handlers, daycare workers, and healthcare professionals) until their doctor performs a series of stool cultures to ensure that they have not been infected with Salmonella Typhi.

HOW CAN SALMONELLA TYPHI INFECTION BE PREVENTED?

When traveling to developing countries where Salmonella Typhi infection is common, follow these guidelines:

- Avoid drinking non-bottled water or drinks with ice
- Avoid raw fruits and vegetables
- Choose foods that are stored and served hot
- Avoid food from street vendors
- Wash your hands with soap and water:
 - after using the bathroom
 - before and after making food
 - before eating
 - rub your hands vigorously for 20 seconds
 - wash all surfaces, including:
 - backs of hands
 - wrists
 - between fingers
 - under fingernails
 - rinse well
 - dry hands with a paper towel
 - turn off the water using a paper towel instead of bare hands

A vaccine is available to prevent infection with Salmonella Typhi prior to traveling. Further information is available through health care providers or the local health department.

Rev. 4/7/2022