

What is typhoid fever?

Typhoid fever is an illness caused by the germ *Salmonella Typhi*. In the United States about 5700 cases are reported each year. Most of these are acquired while traveling outside of the U.S. Typhoid fever is still common in the developing world, where it affects about 27 million persons each year.

Who gets typhoid fever?

Anyone can catch it, but it is more common in less-developed countries. People in the U.S. usually get typhoid fever when traveling to countries where it is common.

How is typhoid fever spread?

People with typhoid fever have the germ in their feces (stool) or urine. If they do not wash their hands after using the restroom, it can be spread to others. Food may also become contaminated by the unwashed hands of an infected food handler.

What are the symptoms of typhoid fever infection?

People with typhoid fever may have fever, headache, general discomfort, loss of appetite, and constipation more often than diarrhea in adults. Typhoid fever can be very serious, especially in the very young or very old.

How soon after infection with typhoid fever do symptoms appear?

Symptoms usually occur 8 - 14 days after infection, with a range of 3 – 60 days.

Where are typhoid fever bacteria found?

The germ that causes typhoid fever is found in the feces (stool) of people who have the infection. It is not naturally occurring in most communities in the U.S. Some people can carry the bacteria for long periods of time without illness, and can still spread it to others.

How long can an infected person carry typhoid fever?

For several days and possibly several months. Tests can show if people are still carrying the bacteria.

Do infected people need to be excluded from work or school?

Since the bacteria that causes typhoid fever is found in the feces (stool), ill people with should not go to school or work until 24 hours have passed without a watery or liquid stool. Health care providers and food handlers should have 3 negative stool cultures at least 24 hours apart and at least 48 hours after completion of antibiotics before returning to work. Good hand hygiene must be practiced at all times.

For school staff (who are not food handlers) or children 5 years of age and older (who are not in diapers and have control of their bowels), 24 hours without a diarrheal stool is required before returning. When returning to work or school, it is very important that careful handwashing is done after using the toilet and before handling food.

Do infected people need to be excluded from child care?

Since the bacteria that causes typhoid fever is found in the feces (stool), children younger than 5 years of age who are in diapers, or who do not have control of their bowels should not go to child care until 3 negative stool cultures are obtained at least 24 hours apart and at least 48 hours after completion of antibiotics. Staff or children 5 years of age and older who are not in diapers and have control of their bowels, should not return until 24 hours without a diarrheal stool has passed. When returning to child care it is important that careful handwashing is done after using the toilet and before handling food.

What is the treatment for typhoid fever?

Antibiotics are used to treat typhoid fever.

How can typhoid fever be prevented?

- Always wash hands thoroughly with soap and water before eating or preparing food, after using the toilet, and after changing diapers.
- People who are ill with typhoid fever should be excluded from handling food and providing patient care.
- All milk and milk products should be pasteurized before consumption.
- Get typhoid vaccination when traveling to high-risk areas outside of the U.S.
- When traveling to countries where typhoid fever is more common, drink bottled water, eat only properly cooked food or fruits and vegetables that can be peeled and avoid ice in drinks. Go to wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/default.aspx or check with your health care provider or health department for more advice on safe travel.