

# TYPHOID FEVER

## **What is Typhoid Fever?**

Typhoid Fever (and Paratyphoid fever) is caused by Salmonella Typhi, Paratyphi A or Paratyphi B bacteria, typically found in feces or urine.

## **What are the symptoms of a Typhoid Fever infection?**

The most common symptoms are gradual onset fever, headache, malaise, abdominal pain, changes in mental status, and constipation. Rose spots on the trunk may be present.

## **How is Typhoid Fever spread?**

Salmonella bacteria may be spread by eating feces or urine contaminated or “dirty” water or food. Infected persons can spread the bacteria by not washing their hands after going to the bathroom and then handling food. Other exposures are consuming shellfish from sewage beds or produce grown in night soil.

## **How long are people contagious?**

Most persons carry the bacteria for 12 weeks after illness. A small percentage of infected persons can become permanent gallbladder carriers.

## **Who gets Typhoid Fever?**

Anyone can get Typhoid Fever, but it is recognized more often in children under 4 years.

## **What treatment is available for people with Typhoid Fever?**

Most Salmonella infections will go away without treatment. Persons with diarrhea should drink plenty of fluids. However, for invasive infections, your health care provider may recommend treatment with antibiotics.

## **Do infected people need to be kept home from school, work or daycare?**

Since the bacteria is found in stool, children should not go to daycare or school and food handlers should be excluded until they have 3 negative stools samples taken 1 month apart or 3 months have passed since notification of disease.

## **How can I protect myself and my family from getting Typhoid Fever?**

- Wash hands frequently with water and soap, and especially after using the toilet, changing a diaper or before preparing and/or eating food. (Sanitizing gel may be substituted when hands are not visibly soiled.)
- Avoid food or water from sources that may be contaminated.
- Wash raw fruits and vegetables prior to eating or chopping.
- Refrigerate foods promptly; minimize time kept at room temperature.
- Immediately washing cutting boards and counters used for preparation to prevent cross contamination with other foods.
- Ensure that the correct internal cooking temperature is reached, particularly when cooking in a microwave.