



Typhoid Fever

What is Typhoid Fever?

- 💧 Typhoid fever is caused by a bacterial infection of the bacteria *Salmonella typhi*.
- 💧 The incubation period lasts for 1 to 3 weeks after infection and the infection symptoms can last up to 3 weeks, sometimes even longer.
- 💧 Symptoms appear gradually and start with a headache followed, by fever and abdominal pain, followed by constipation and diarrhoea, the former being more common during the early stages of the disease.
- 💧 In the latter stages of the disease, bronchitis develops, accompanied by a loss of appetite and subsequent weight loss.
- 💧 Typhoid fever, when untreated, can develop into intestinal perforation or haemorrhage, contributing to a death rate of 30%.
- 💧 Asymptomatic infections do occur.
- 💧 In some cases rose-spotted rash can appear on the body.

How is Typhoid Fever transmitted?

- 💧 Typhoid bacilli is excreted in the stool of infected persons during and if untreated for 4 months after recovery from the disease.
- 💧 It is transmitted by the faecal-oral route.
- 💧 Flies can also contaminate food.
- 💧 In some cases a patient can recover, but some develop a chronic carrier state, whereby they continue to produce the bacterium in their stools.
- 💧 Typhoid fever is predominantly a water-washed disease, but may also be waterborne.

How can Typhoid Fever be treated?

- 💧 Antibiotic medication and bed rest during the early stages of the disease are essential to prevent fatal complications. Typhoid fever can be very dangerous, even lethal to HIV positive patients.
- 💧 Provision of sufficient water for personal hygiene and fly control.

How can Typhoid Fever be prevented?

- 💧 Do not drink untreated water. Water can be disinfected by adding one teaspoon of domestic bleach to 20 litres of water and waiting for at least one hour before drinking. If no bleach is available, water can be boiled vigorously for at least 3 minutes. If the water is turbid or cloudy, add 2 to 3 teaspoons of bleach.
- 💧 Proper personal hygiene and sanitation should be maintained.
- 💧 Fruit and vegetables must be peeled or washed before eating.
- 💧 People who are chronic carriers of the disease should not be allowed to work with food or in day-care centres. They should be treated with antibiotics until 3 consecutive stool cultures are negative for *Salmonella typhi*.

Reference: DWAF (2003). Management of water-related microbial diseases, RSA

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