Can it be prevented?

There is a vaccine for typhoid, which provides some protection against the disease if it is given at least ten days before travelling to a risk area. Currently there is no vaccination available for paratyphoid. Good hand and food hygiene and drinking clean (bottled) water will reduce the risk.

Contact details

Telephone: 020 3456 7891
Fax: 020 7388 7645
Address: The Hospital for Tropical Diseases
2nd Floor Mortimer Market Centre
Capper Street
off Tottenham Court Road
London WC1E 6JB
Websites: www.thehtd.org
www.uclh.nhs.uk
Written by: Dr A Scobie
Dr R Behrens
Prof D Lockwood
Dr S Morris-Jones

If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this document, please contact us on 020 3456 7891. We will try our best to meet your needs.
What are Typhoid and paratyphoid fever?
Typhoid and paratyphoid (sometimes also called enteric fever) are similar diseases caused by a species of Salmonella bacteria only found in humans. Although they have similar symptoms, paratyphoid is often a milder disease.

Where do typhoid and paratyphoid occur?
Typhoid and paratyphoid are common in the Tropics – both are linked to poor hygiene and sanitation. The typhoid and paratyphoid bacteria are found in many parts of the world including Asia, Africa, Central and South America although most UK infections occur in travellers after returning from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Can I be cured of the disease?
Yes, over 95% of individuals are completely cured after the correct treatment. However, you may still be infectious during treatment and should avoid preparing food for others at this time.

Am I still infectious after treatment?
A small proportion of people, although well, remain infectious despite treatment. They are known as carriers. They continue to excrete the bacterium in their stool, and may be infectious to others. They need careful advice about transmission, and may require monitoring and further treatment.

Public health doctors (the Health Protection Agency) are informed of all cases of typhoid and paratyphoid in the UK.

When can I go back to work?
If you handle food at work, public health doctors will want to be sure that you have cleared the bacteria before resuming work. This will require two negative stool samples before clearance is given.

What are the symptoms?
Symptoms develop 10-21 days after infection. Symptoms can include:
- Fever – this is the most common symptom
- Headache
- Loss of appetite and nausea
- Diarrhoea and / or constipation
- Abdominal pain
- Dry cough (usually early on in the illness)

What is the treatment?
Diagnosis is usually by a blood test or stool examination. Once confirmed, antibiotics are the treatment of choice. The duration and type of treatment will depend upon the resistance pattern of the bacterium, but may be for up to three weeks.

How are they spread?
Typhoid and paratyphoid are spread through contaminated food and unclean water. In particular, risk is associated with food that is improperly cooked, poorly stored or in contact with flies and dirty hands. High risk foodstuffs include poultry, dairy products, eggs and shellfish.

What are Typhoid and paratyphoid fever?
Typhoid and paratyphoid (sometimes also called enteric fever) are similar diseases caused by a species of Salmonella bacteria only found in humans. Although they have similar symptoms, paratyphoid is often a milder disease.

Where do typhoid and paratyphoid occur?
Typhoid and paratyphoid are common in the Tropics – both are linked to poor hygiene and sanitation. The typhoid and paratyphoid bacteria are found in many parts of the world including Asia, Africa, Central and South America although most UK infections occur in travellers after returning from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Can I be cured of the disease?
Yes, over 95% of individuals are completely cured after the correct treatment. However, you may still be infectious during treatment and should avoid preparing food for others at this time.

Am I still infectious after treatment?
A small proportion of people, although well, remain infectious despite treatment. They are known as carriers. They continue to excrete the bacterium in their stool, and may be infectious to others. They need careful advice about transmission, and may require monitoring and further treatment.

Public health doctors (the Health Protection Agency) are informed of all cases of typhoid and paratyphoid in the UK.

When can I go back to work?
If you handle food at work, public health doctors will want to be sure that you have cleared the bacteria before resuming work. This will require two negative stool samples before clearance is given.

What are the symptoms?
Symptoms develop 10-21 days after infection. Symptoms can include:
- Fever – this is the most common symptom
- Headache
- Loss of appetite and nausea
- Diarrhoea and / or constipation
- Abdominal pain
- Dry cough (usually early on in the illness)

What is the treatment?
Diagnosis is usually by a blood test or stool examination. Once confirmed, antibiotics are the treatment of choice. The duration and type of treatment will depend upon the resistance pattern of the bacterium, but may be for up to three weeks.

How are they spread?
Typhoid and paratyphoid are spread through contaminated food and unclean water. In particular, risk is associated with food that is improperly cooked, poorly stored or in contact with flies and dirty hands. High risk foodstuffs include poultry, dairy products, eggs and shellfish.

What are Typhoid and paratyphoid fever?
Typhoid and paratyphoid (sometimes also called enteric fever) are similar diseases caused by a species of Salmonella bacteria only found in humans. Although they have similar symptoms, paratyphoid is often a milder disease.

Where do typhoid and paratyphoid occur?
Typhoid and paratyphoid are common in the Tropics – both are linked to poor hygiene and sanitation. The typhoid and paratyphoid bacteria are found in many parts of the world including Asia, Africa, Central and South America although most UK infections occur in travellers after returning from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Can I be cured of the disease?
Yes, over 95% of individuals are completely cured after the correct treatment. However, you may still be infectious during treatment and should avoid preparing food for others at this time.

Am I still infectious after treatment?
A small proportion of people, although well, remain infectious despite treatment. They are known as carriers. They continue to excrete the bacterium in their stool, and may be infectious to others. They need careful advice about transmission, and may require monitoring and further treatment.

Public health doctors (the Health Protection Agency) are informed of all cases of typhoid and paratyphoid in the UK.

When can I go back to work?
If you handle food at work, public health doctors will want to be sure that you have cleared the bacteria before resuming work. This will require two negative stool samples before clearance is given.