

Typhoid and Paratyphoid

What is typhoid and paratyphoid?

Typhoid and Paratyphoid are illnesses caused by the bacteria (germ) *Salmonella typhi* and *Salmonella paratyphi*. These infections occur worldwide but particularly in areas of poor sanitation and contaminated water supplies such as the Pacific Islands, Asia, the Middle East, Central and South America, and Africa. Almost all typhoid and paratyphoid cases in New Zealand are caught overseas.

How do you catch typhoid and paratyphoid fever?

By eating food or drinking water that is contaminated with faeces or urine from a person who has the illness or who may be a carrier of the bacteria.

How to prevent typhoid and paratyphoid?

Make sure you wash your hands with soapy water for 20 seconds, then dry well with a clean cloth or paper towel every time:

- after going to the toilet
- before preparing food, eating or drinking
- after changing babies nappies.

How do you know for sure you have typhoid or paratyphoid?

Typhoid and paratyphoid cause illness in the whole body, not just the abdomen, so you may feel and get:

- fever (high temperature)
- tiredness
- headache
- sweating
- tummy pain
- constipation or diarrhoea
- a red rash on the stomach and chest
- cough

If you get sick with typhoid, you will usually get the symptoms 8 to 14 days after being infected. With paratyphoid, you will get the symptoms 1 to 10 days after being infected.

What should I do if I think I have typhoid and paratyphoid?

- visit your family doctor who will ask you where you have travelled and stayed. They will ask how you are feeling and examine you
- if your doctor thinks you have typhoid and paratyphoid they will ask for faeces or blood sample.

When can I go back to work, school or daycare?

- anyone with diarrhoea, even if the reason is not known, should not go to work, school or daycare
- children should stay away from daycare until test show they are free of the bacteria, older children may also be asked to provide samples before being allowed to return to school
- adults whose job involves preparing food, working at a daycare centre, or in healthcare should not go back until two samples (taken 48 hours apart) show no signs of typhoid/paratyphoid.

How can I prevent getting infected while travelling to countries where there is typhoid/paratyphoid?

- do not drink unsafe water, including ice and drinks mixed with water
- do not eat from street stalls
- ensure hot food is well cooked and eaten while still hot
- do not eat uncooked food including fruit and vegetables (unless you are able to peel them yourself) and uncooked seafood
- do not eat and drink unpasteurised milk or dairy foods
- drink bottled water or boil drinking water if you are unsure of its source or safety.

It is a good idea to see a travel doctor to discuss vaccination before you leave New Zealand. For helpful information for people travelling to other countries visit www.safetravel.govt.nz

If you visit the Auckland Regional Public Health website at www.arphs.health.nz you will find information on food safety and hygiene plus resources for typhoid.

For more help or information call Healthline on 0800 611 116

Health professionals: For more information, contact ARPHS on 09 623 4600

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