



FACT SHEET

Typhoid

What is it?

- Typhoid fever is a contagious infection of the intestines that affects the whole body. It is caused by a bacteria called *Salmonella typhi* that is found in the stools (bowel movements) of infected persons.
- In developing countries, typhoid often occurs in epidemics (many people get sick at once). Most people in the United States get typhoid as a result of visiting another country where the food or water supply has been contaminated.

What are the symptoms?

- Symptoms usually start 1 to 3 weeks after exposure to the bacteria.
- Symptoms include:
 - High fever
 - Headache
 - Sore throat
 - Vomiting
 - Diarrhea
 - Skin rash
 - Weakness
 - Inability to think clearly
- The symptoms may take 2 weeks or more to go away.

How is it spread?

- Typhoid is spread when a person drinks or eats food and water contaminated by human waste (stool or urine) containing *Salmonella typhi* bacteria.
- A person who no longer has symptoms but still transmits the bacteria is called a "carrier."

"Carriers" must be extra careful with their personal hygiene. They should not work in restaurants or places where food is handled until a health care provider determines that they no longer carry the bacteria.

Diagnosis and treatment

- The bacteria can be identified from the stool (bowel movement); sometimes from blood or urine.

Prevention

- Wash hands well with soap and water after going to the bathroom and before preparing food items.
- If traveling to a foreign country, be sure the drinking water is safe.
- Maintain cleanliness and proper sanitation at all times, especially after a flood or other natural disasters.
- People can be vaccinated against typhoid. Vaccination is not usually needed in the United States. It is usually recommended only for international travels going to developing countries where exposure to contaminated food or water is likely.

Report all cases to El Paso Department of Public Health by calling 915-212-6520

