

Typhoid fever



Typhoid is a dangerous infection of the gut with the bacterium *Salmonella typhi*. It affects the whole body. It is spread from faeces to mouth. Sometimes via contaminated food or water. Typhoid often occurs in epidemics as the bacteria are transferred from one person to another.

It begins like colds or flu, with headache, sore throat and sometimes a dry cough. The fever rises and falls a little, but on average steadily increases every day, reaching 40°C on the fifth day. The pulse is relatively slow. If the fever goes up, and the pulse reduces, it is probably a sign of typhoid. There may also be loss of appetite, stomach pains or cramps, vomiting, diarrhoea or constipation.

In the second week there is a high fever with trembling, and a faint spotty rash may appear on the body. The patient might be delirious (cannot think clearly, speaks but makes no sense). Weakness, weight loss, dehydration.

In the third week, with effective treatment, slow recovery.

Prevention

1. Always use a toilet for both urinating and defecating and always wash your hands afterwards. Keep the toilet and surrounding area clean.
2. Prevent contamination of food or water by human faeces. Typhoid bacteria may be present in the faeces of a patient with typhoid for many years after the patient has recovered.
3. Prevent flies from landing on your food – their last visit may have been to infected faeces. Cover food when not being eaten. Make fly traps and place in the toilets.
4. Always drink water that has been boiled. It should be kept in a clean, covered container. The container should be washed whenever it is empty with hot, soapy water and then rinsed well.
5. Be particularly careful with the water you drink when flooding occurs.

Treatment

Lower the fever, and give plenty liquids, including ORS. Give nutritious foods, in liquid form if necessary. Include plenty of vegetables and fruit juices. If blood appears in the faeces, take the patient to hospital.

Make an infusion with 5g dried *Artemisia annua* leaves together with one handful of dried lemongrass in one litre of water. Allow to stand for 15 minutes. Divide the tea into 4 equal parts and drink at intervals of 6 hours. Repeat this for 14 days.

If you have no artemisia, make a one litre infusion of one of the following: *Azadirachta indica* (neem), *Melia azedarach* (melia) or *Vernonia amygdalina* (bitter leaf). Drink this in the course of the day, and continue this treatment for 14 days.

In addition to all these treatments, add a spoonful of chopped, raw garlic to your food three times every day.

Disclaimer: Discover has compiled this information with the best possible interests of its readership at heart. Discover cannot be held responsible for any negative consequence of following the procedures described in this paper.