

## **What is it and Why it is important to know more:**

Typhoid fever is a bacterial infection caused by [Salmonella typhi](#), primarily transmitted through contaminated food and water. This disease affects a lot of people and more recently there is an upward trend due to lowered immunity and poor waste management. It particularly poses a threat to those in regions lacking access to clean water and proper sanitation. Typhoid is contagious.

## **What are the complications caused by Typhoid:**

Typhoid is treatable. Early detection and treatment help avoid complications and ensure rapid recovery. [Vaccines](#) against Typhoid fever reduce risk and provide protection.

## **Typhoid Symptoms and when to seek medical attention:**

The symptoms of Typhoid are common and can be confusing and overlap with other diseases. Typically, symptoms start appearing 1-3 weeks after exposure to the bacteria. These could include one or several high fever, debilitating headaches, weakness, abdominal discomfort, loss of appetite, constipation or diarrhoea. It is important to consult a healthcare professional for an accurate diagnosis if symptoms persist.

## **Who is at risk:**

Individuals at higher risk of contracting Typhoid fever include:

- Travellers to or residents of Typhoid-prone regions
- Those with weakened immune systems
- Individuals who are not vaccinated
- Close contact with an infected person; touching surfaces, food or water contaminated with Typhoid bacteria
- Consumption of untreated water or ice, raw food, unpasteurised milk or contaminated juices

## **How is Typhoid diagnosed?**

Doctors will conduct a physical examination, recommend tests to diagnose the condition, and look for indicators like abdominal tenderness, enlarged spleen and liver, swollen lymph nodes and a rash known as [rose spots](#). A culture test is most common which determines the growth of the bacteria. Diagnostic tests include:

# Typhoid Fever: Understanding, Treating and Preventing

- **Blood test** which examines antibodies and blood culture tests to identify the Salmonella typhi bacteria
- **Stool and urine samples** are tested for presence of the bacteria
- There are [other tests](#) that may be prescribed in some situations

## How to treat Typhoid fever:

Treatment for Typhoid fever generally involves [antibiotics](#) with supportive care such as adequate hydration, rest and fever-reducing medications.

**Isolation** precautions must be followed to prevent transmission to others, especially during the acute phase of the illness. In severe cases, hospitalisation may be required for close monitoring.

## Precautions are required to prevent the spread of Typhoid fever:

These are as relevant for caregivers as for patients.

- **Avoid close contact with people**, especially vulnerable individuals such as young children, elderly people and those with weak immunity.
- **Practise good hygiene habits** with frequent handwashing with soap after using the toilet and before handling food or eating. Encourage others in your household to do the same.
- **Avoid sharing personal items** such as utensils, towels and toiletries to prevent the spread of bacteria.
- You can be contagious after being infected even without symptoms. A **simple test will ensure** that you are not a transmitter.

## How to prevent Typhoid:

Typhoid can be prevented by:

- **Getting vaccinated** against Typhoid. ([Adult vaccination](#))
- **Drink** bottled, canned or boiled water and avoid ice cubes made from untreated water.
- **Eat well-cooked food** only. Ensure fruits and vegetables are washed with clean water.
- **Ensure safe disposal of sewage and waste** to prevent contamination of water sources.



Source: [www.lalpathlabs.com](http://www.lalpathlabs.com)

Typhoid can be prevented. If you get infected, early diagnosis will help get treatment and guide recovery. You have to be careful that you do not transmit the bacteria to others.

### To know more:

- [Typhoid fever symptoms & causes](#)
- [What can travellers do to prevent Typhoid fever](#)
- [What are the stages of Typhoid fever](#)

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