

Fact sheet

Paratyphoid fever

What is paratyphoid fever?

Paratyphoid fever is a serious contagious bacterial infection similar to typhoid fever.

How is paratyphoid fever spread?

Paratyphoid fever is spread by drinking water or eating food contaminated by sewage or food prepared by people who are carriers of the bacteria. You can also get paratyphoid fever if you come into contact with tiny amounts of feces and urine from an ill person. This may occur directly by close personal contact, or indirectly by touching contaminated surfaces.

What are the signs and symptoms of paratyphoid fever?

Symptoms are very similar to typhoid fever and may include high fever, loss of appetite, vomiting, constipation and diarrhea.

How long after infection do symptoms appear?

Symptoms may appear from 1 to 10 days after exposure and may be gradual in adults, but are often sudden in children.

Who is most at risk?

Anyone can get paratyphoid fever, but travelers visiting developing countries in Asia, Africa, Central and South America are at greatest risk.

What type of health problems are caused by paratyphoid fever?

Intestinal problems similar to appendicitis can occur, such as intense cramping and soreness in the lower right abdomen.

How is paratyphoid fever diagnosed?

Laboratory testing of feces, urine or blood is necessary to confirm infection.

How is paratyphoid fever treated?

Antibiotics can be prescribed to relieve symptoms and to reduce the likelihood of becoming a long-term carrier.

What should I do if I have been diagnosed with paratyphoid fever?

If you feel sick and think you may have paratyphoid fever:

- Talk to your healthcare provider if you feel seriously ill, especially if you have a fever. Tell them about any travel.
- Avoid contact with other people while you are sick.
- Do not go to work or school for at least 24 hours after symptoms have finished.
- Wash and dry your hands thoroughly after going to the toilet.
- Avoid preparing or handling food and drinks for other people until at least 24 hours after your symptoms have finished.
- If you must handle or prepare food, thoroughly wash your hands

beforehand to reduce the risk of spreading the infection to others.

- Immediately remove and wash any clothes or bedding contaminated with vomit or diarrhea using detergent and hot water.

How can paratyphoid fever be prevented?

When traveling to areas where cases of paratyphoid fever are high, avoid risky or unsafe foods and beverages (uncooked foods, unbottled water, drinks made with ice). Safe food and water precautions and frequent handwashing are important in preventing typhoid and paratyphoid fever. Visit [Food and Water Safety](#) for more information on the types of food and beverages to consume or avoid. Remember: “Boil it, cook it, peel it, or forget it.”

A vaccine is available for typhoid fever and can provide some protection for travelers to high-risk areas. There is no vaccine for paratyphoid fever.

Where can I get more information?

- Your personal healthcare provider
- [Traveler’s Health](#)
- [Coalition Against Typhoid](#)
- [Utah Department of Health and Human Services](#)