

Typhoid & Paratyphoid:

(ICD 10: A 01.0/ A 01.0 – A 01.4)

Typhoid fever is also known as Enteric fever or Typhus abdominalis. A systemic bacterial infection characterized by:

- Insidious onset of sustained fever.
- Severe headache.
- Malaise.
- Anorexia.
- Relative bradycardia.
- Splenomegaly.
- Rose spots on the trunk.
- Non-productive cough.
- Constipation which is more common than diarrhoea in adults.
- In typhoid fever ulceration of the Peyer's patches in the ileum can cause intestinal haemorrhage or perforation in late and untreated cases.

Paratyphoid fever presents with a similar clinical picture but tends to be milder.

Clinical case definition:

Any individual who has the signs and symptoms of the disease (i.e.) Fever with one or more of the following:

- Loss of appetite.
- Abdominal discomfort.
- Severe diarrhoea.
- Altered mental status.
- Shock.
- Respiratory distress.
- Intestinal bleeding.
- Myocarditis.
- Coma.

Mode of transmission:

By ingestion of:

- Food and water contaminated by faeces and urine of patients or carriers.
- Shellfish taken from sewage contaminated beds.
- Vegetables fertilized by night soil and consumed raw.
- Food contaminated by flies.
- Contaminated milk and milk products.

Incubation period:

- 3 days to 1 month.
- Usually 8 to 14 days.
- Paratyphoid gastroenteritis 1 to 10 days.
- Period of communicability is as long as the bacilli appear in excreta, usually the first week of convalescence.
- For paratyphoid usually 1 to 2 weeks of convalescence.

Typhoid Prevention:

Preventive measures:

- Hand washing. Wash hands regularly after using the toilet and before eating or handling food and drinks.
- Ensure sanitary disposal of faeces. Flush after using the toilet.
- Ensure you drink boiled water or bottled water (mineral water)
- Control flies by screening, spraying with insecticides and by use of insecticidal baits and traps.
- Particular attention should be directed to the proper storage of salads and other foods served cold. These provisions apply equally to home and public eating places.
- Ensure proper storage of food.
- Pasteurize or boil milk and all dairy products.
- Make sure you consume cooked food from clean outlets. Food should be boiling hot at the time of serving. Cold food should be heated up prior to consumption.
- Boil or steam shell fish for at least 10 minutes before eating.
- Breast feed infants otherwise make sure to boil all milk and water used for infant feeding.
- Immunization of those dealing with food or those with high risk.
- Floors have to be mopped with sodium hypochlorite 1:100 (1 part of sodium hypochlorite in 99 parts of water). The same strength is to be used for bathrooms and toilets.
- Visit a doctor immediately if you have any signs and symptoms as listed above.