

# Typhoid and paratyphoid fever

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Typhoid is a serious disease that needs immediate treatment. Symptoms usually develop 1 day to 2 weeks after exposure, and sometimes up to 2 months after. Symptoms include fever, headache, tiredness and stomach pain.

Typhoid is caused by infection with the bacteria *Salmonella* Typhi. Paratyphoid fever is a similar disease caused by a different but related bacteria, *Salmonella* Paratyphi. Paratyphoid infections are usually less severe than typhoid infections.

Typhoid and paratyphoid are not common in Australia, but people can catch them if they travel to places such as India, Africa, Asia, South and Central America and the Middle East.

## How it spreads

The bacteria causing these diseases are found in the faeces (poo) and urine of infected people. These diseases usually spread when people drink water or eat food that is contaminated with the bacteria. It can also spread if people touch contaminated surfaces such as taps, toilets, cutlery, toys and nappies.

Some people have the bacteria in their faeces but do not have symptoms of the disease. They can spread the disease.

There is a vaccine against typhoid, but no vaccine available for paratyphoid fever.

## Exclusion period

Exclude until cleared by the local public health unit.

Contacts: Talk to your local public health unit for advice.

## Actions for educators and other staff

Follow the exclusion period in the *Staying healthy* guidelines.

Contact your local public health unit for advice if you have a case of typhoid or paratyphoid in your service. In the Northern Territory, education and care services must notify their local public health unit about any cases of typhoid or paratyphoid in the service.

Ensure staff and children wash their hands well after using the toilet.

Ensure staff are using appropriate cleaning practices, as described in the *Staying healthy* guideline.

## Actions for parents and carers

See a doctor immediately if you think your child may have typhoid or paratyphoid.

Keep your child at home for the exclusion period or until they are feeling better. You will need a medical certificate of recovery before your child can return to the care service.

Make sure you and your child wash their hands regularly, especially after going to the toilet or changing nappies.

If you are planning to travel to a country where typhoid is common, children over the age of 2 and adults can be vaccinated before travel. See your doctor at least 6 weeks before you travel.

## More information about typhoid and paratyphoid fever

See healthdirect for more information on prevention, diagnosis and treatment of typhoid and paratyphoid fever ([healthdirect.gov.au/typhoid-and-paratyphoid](http://healthdirect.gov.au/typhoid-and-paratyphoid)).

To find out if a child needs medical help:

- use the online symptom checker ([healthdirect.gov.au/symptom-checker](http://healthdirect.gov.au/symptom-checker))
- speak to a registered nurse by calling the 24-hour health advice hotline on 1800 022 222.