Typhoid

The Disease

Typhoid fever is an infection (enteric fever) caused by Salmonella typhi bacteria. The disease causes fever, headaches, fatigue and constipation (although diarrhoea may also occur). Symptoms may last for 3 weeks or longer. Some patients have only a mild illness, however the disease can occasionally be fatal if not treated. Others may be asymptomatic, although they may carry the Typhoid organism long-term and are capable of transmitting the infection. Some 5% of people suffering Typhoid become chronic carriers. A similar illness can also occur following infection with Salmonella paratyphi bacteria; the disease state is also known as “Enteric Fever.”

Typhoid is curable and can be treated with appropriate antibiotics.

Where is it found?

Typhoid is a public health concern in developing countries worldwide. Prevalence is high throughout Asia, Africa and South America.

Risk to travellers

Typhoid is transmitted by food and water that has been contaminated with faecal material from persons who either have the disease or are carriers.

The risk of infection increases for those with one or more of the following risk factors:

- prolonged travel (over 2 weeks).
- travel to rural areas.
- living in conditions with poor sanitation.
- adventurous eating habits.
- some medical conditions, such as lowered gastric defences

Vaccination

Type:

- Oral live-attenuated vaccine (Vivotif oral).
- Injectable, synthetic (Typhim Vi/Typherix).
- Combined with Hepatitis A (Vivaxim)

Standard Schedule:

Oral (refrigerated):

- Three capsules at 0, 3, 5 days confers protection for three years.
Injection:

- Single dose gives 3 years protection.

Level of protection:

- Oral vaccine provides about 75% protection: food and water precautions are important.
- Injectable vaccine offers ~84% protection: food and water precautions are important.

Possible side effects:

Usually infrequent and mild:

Injection:

- Fever and headache (9% of recipients)
- Redness, soreness, swelling and itching around the injection site.
- General malaise.

Oral:

- Abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea and rashes.
- As with all vaccines, there is a small risk of allergic reaction.

More information on Typhoid is available during your pre-travel consultation with Travelvax. Call 1300 360 164 for the location of the clinic nearest to you.