

TYPHOID FEVER



WHAT IS IT ?

Typhoid fever is a bacterial infection that has become rare in industrialized countries, but that is still common in countries with poor hygiene where it is responsible for 600,000 cases each year. (28)

SYMPTOMS

- Following a 7 to 14-day incubation period, typical signs, including diffuse abdominal pain, possibly high fever, anorexia, and very often diarrhea, progressively appear.
- Daytime drowsiness and nighttime insomnia are characteristic signs.
- Possible complications include gastrointestinal hemorrhage and perforation, heart failure, and encephalitis.
- Effective antibiotics are available, and the prognosis in patients under treatment is usually favorable.

Nevertheless, recovery may be followed by chronic carriage during several months. Moreover, the emergence of drug-resistant strains makes the treatment more complex.

EPIDEMIOLOGY AND VACCINATION

- The reservoir of the pathogen is strictly human.
- Transmission usually occurs through the fecal-oral route by ingestion of contaminated food or water.
- Prevention relies on good hygiene and vaccination.
- Several vaccines against typhoid fever are available.

References :

28 - Typhoid Fever. Review article. Christopher M. Parry, M.B, Tran Tinh Hien. The New England Journal of Medicine. Vol 347, N° 22. November 28, 2002