

## FACTSHEET 7 – Typhoid & Paratyphoid

August 2016

### What Is Typhoid And Paratyphoid?

Typhoid and paratyphoid are preventable illnesses caused by salmonella bacteria. They are found across the world but are more common in countries where sanitary facilities are less developed. In the UK, most people who have caught typhoid and paratyphoid had recently travelled overseas.

### What are the Symptoms?

- People usually have a high fever with general aches and pains and stomach upset or constipation, which is difficulty in passing stools (faeces or 'poo').
- Later they may feel sick, lose their appetite, or have diarrhoea (loose watery stools).

### How Is It Spread?

- You can catch it through eating food or drinks that contain the bacteria. The food or drink can look clean but still cause illness.
- Food or drink can become infected after a person who has been ill handles it, or when sewage enters drinking water.
- Sewage can also infect shellfish in the water and eating infected shellfish can cause the illness.
- Contact with infected people (through not washing hands thoroughly after using the toilet and/or before handling food).

### Why Do Some People Need A Stool Test?

- Your doctor may ask you for a stool sample to test for the illness.
- People who have recently recovered from the illness, or may have been ill with it in the past, may also be tested in the same way to see if they are clear of the infection.
- If you need to provide a stool sample, an Environmental Health Officer will let you know.

### How Can I Protect Myself And Others?

- Ensure that you wash your hands carefully using soap, hot water and clean towels.
- This is most important after going to the toilet and before preparing a meal, or a drink, or eating.
- Young children should be supervised when washing their hands.
- If you have typhoid or paratyphoid, you should avoid cooking food for others while you are on treatment. If you do have to cook, it is important that you wash your hands carefully before preparing a meal, or a drink, or eating.
- If you plan to travel abroad, ask your GP whether you need a typhoid vaccination. It is free.
- There is no vaccine for paratyphoid.
- Hand washing is especially important when travelling.

### **Do I Need To Stay Off Work Or School If I Have Been Ill?**

- The risk of spreading the illness depends on what you do.
- People who handle food at work, young children, those that work in health care and some others may have a higher risk of spreading the illness.
- These people may have to stay off work for longer and provide stool samples to make sure it is safe for them to return.
- An Environmental Health Officer will explain what you should do based on your personal circumstances.