

## United Nations Medical Directors

### Typhoid Fever Risk Mitigation Plan and Recommendations for UN Personnel

21 February 2023

- The following occupational health recommendations are provided by the UN Medical Directors to all UN Organizations and apply to all UN personnel to reduce the risk of UN personnel acquiring typhoid fever.
- Typhoid fever is caused by *Salmonella Typhi*. It is a life-threatening infection as bacteria that are ingested can multiply and then spread to the blood stream. Humans are the only reservoir and the infection is transmitted via the fecal-oral route by ingestion of contaminated food or water.
- Typhoid is common across the globe in developing areas lacking access to safe water and with poor sanitation
- **Duty stations should take into account local host country/authorities' guidance and regulations when implementing these recommendations.**
- Contact [dos-dhmosh-public-health@un.org](mailto:dos-dhmosh-public-health@un.org) for more information.

| Risk Categories  | UN Medical Directors' Recommendations  |
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| <b>1 All UN personnel including those with underlying health conditions and pregnant women</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow strict hand hygiene practices after using the bathroom and prior to eating.</li> <li>• Follow food safety <a href="#">recommendations</a>:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ensure food is properly cooked and hot when served.</li> <li>○ Drink only pasteurized or boiled milk.</li> <li>○ Avoid ice/iced water unless it is made with safe water.</li> <li>○ Ensure water is safe to drink or consider boiling or using a reliable, slow-release disinfecting agent or bottled water.</li> <li>○ Wash fruits and vegetables carefully with safe water (boiled, bottled etc.), particularly if they are eaten raw. Try to peel fruits/vegetables whenever possible.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Be aware of symptoms of Typhoid fever (see Section 2)</li> <li>• Review vaccination records and consider receiving the typhoid vaccine. More information is available <a href="#">here</a>.</li> <li>• There are two types of typhoid vaccine, an oral vaccine and an injectable vaccine. The oral typhoid vaccine is live attenuated and is therefore contraindicated in some groups including pregnant women and those who are immunocompromised. Check with your medical provider for more details.</li> <li>• Vaccination should be taken prior to travelling whenever possible.</li> </ul> |
| <b>2 UN health care workers (HCWs)</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be aware of symptoms of Typhoid fever which include fever, fatigue, nausea, abdominal pain, diarrhea (or in some cases constipation). Some patients may have a rash (flat, rose-colored spots).</li> <li>• Typhoid fever is treated with antibiotics and treatment of choice will depend on local resistance patterns. Some countries have higher rates of multidrug resistant (MDR) or extremely drug resistant (XDR) <i>Salmonella</i></li> </ul>   |

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*Typhi*. Clinicians should stay up to date on local resistance patterns as well as empiric and definitive antibiotic treatment.

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**3 UN personnel with confirmed Typhoid fever**

- Take the prescribed antibiotics and other treatment as prescribed by your physician or doctor.
  - As typhoid can spread from person to person via the fecal-oral route, good hand hygiene is required.
  - Food handlers should not be involved in preparing food while they are infected.
  - Some individuals can go on to become chronic carriers of Salmonella and may shed the bacteria in their stool for long periods of time.
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**4 UN personnel traveling to Typhoid fever endemic locations**

- Typhoid fever vaccination should be offered to travelers to destinations where the risk of typhoid fever is high.
  - When the safety of drinking water is questionable, boil it or, if this is not possible, disinfect it with a reliable, slow-release disinfectant agent (usually available at pharmacies).
  - Wash hands thoroughly and frequently using soap, in particular after contact with pets or farm animals, or after having been to the toilet.
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**References:**

- <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/typhoid#:~:text=WHO%20estimates%20the%20global%20typhoid,children%20are%20at%20highest%20risk>
- <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/272272/WER9313.pdf?ua=1>