TYPHOID

Typhoid is a severe, infectious and life-threatening disease. It is spread through unhygienic food, drinks and water where bacteria Salmonella typhi develop which make person ill. Persons who consume contaminated food or water exhibit symptoms of fever with severe complications. Various drugs used to treat typhoid are unsuccessful against resistant strains of typhoid bacteria. In a developing country such as India, it is a great threat and a major cause of death. Typhoid disease mainly hits on children who are in school-going age. It is not very common in adults and older people.

Typhoid is a communicable disease and it is transmitted in many ways. Bacteria of typhoid are survived in unhygienic conditions. These bacteria are spread by typhoid patients and carriers in large quantities through stools and vomit. The bacteria then travel to food, drinks and water through house-flies and other insects. Such foods are contaminated. When the contaminated food or drinks, are taken by a healthy person, bacteria enter into the body and causes typhoid fever. A person may get typhoid fever by consuming food or drink that has been carried by someone having the bacteria, or if sewage contaminated with Salmonella typhi get into water used for drinking or washing food. A person infected with Salmonella typhi may infect others, as the bacteria remain in the body for months. There are 107 different strains of this bacterium. Paratyphoid is caused by Salmonella enteritidis paratyphi A, B or C. It is generally a less infectious than typhoid. A very low percent of typhoid patients remain chronic carriers regardless of treatment. Most common complications are intestinal bleeding and perforation.The source of fever is polluted water.

In India, due to population explosion, water is polluted and this disease is a matter of worry especially in disaster areas, where water supply and sewage disposal are disrupted. Raw vegetables grown on sewage fields also spread infection. The bacteria can survive in soil and water for several months. They grow rapidly in milk and milk products. Unhygienic conditions in surroundings are mainly responsible for the prevalent infection.

Symptoms of Typhoid

1. Severe headache
2. Fever
3. Loss of Appetite
4. General discomfort, uneasiness, or ill feeling (malaise)
5. Rash (rose spots) appearing on the lower chest and abdomen during the second week of the fever.
6. Abdominal tenderness
7. Constipation, then diarrhoea
8. Bloody stools
9. Slow, sluggish, lethargic
10. Fatigue
11. Weakness
12. Nosebleed
13. Chills
14. Delirium
15. Confusion
16. Agitation
17. Fluctuating mood
18. Difficulty paying attention (attention deficit)
19. Hallucinations

How to avoid Typhoid ?

The following precautions need to be taken to avoid typhoid fever:

1) Avoid eating risky foods and drinks.
2) Getting vaccinated against typhoid fever.
3) Buy bottled water or boil it before drinking.
4) Ask for drinks without ice unless the ice is made from bottled or boiled water.
5) Avoid raw vegetables and fruits that can not be peeled. Vegetables like lettuce are easily contaminated and are very hard to wash well.
6) Foods and beverages from street vendors should be avoided.

Prevention

In many developing nations, the public health goal is to prevent and control typhoid by safe drinking water, improved sanitation and adequate medical care but it is quite difficult to achieve. Because it is a tough task to change the living style of people in a short span. On this ground, many professionals believe that vaccinating high-risk populaions is the best way to control typhoid fever. Clean hygienic habits, drinking only purified water and abstaining from eating raw leafy vegetables and food left in the open help in preventing this disease.

Vaccination is also necessary to avert the disease. A single injection given 2 years on wards gives protection against typhoid for 3 years. It will shield a person who is traveling to a country where typhoid fever is prevalent. Doses can be chosen between a four-dose oral vaccine and a single-dose injection. Both are up to 75 percent effective in preventing the infection. Two types of vaccines, an oral typhoid vaccine and a single-dose injectable vaccine that produces fewer side effects than

the older two-dose injection vaccine are available. Both vaccines are similarly effectual and offer great protection against the illness. The oral vaccine (Vivotif) contains a live but weakened strain of the Salmonella bacteria that causes typhoid fever. The vaccine consists of four capsules that are taken every other day over a one-week period. The capsule protects the vaccine against stomach acid so it remains active when it reaches the intestine where the immunity develops. The oral vaccine can be given either as a first-time dose or as a booster dose. The protection should last about 5 years, at which time another booster dose would be needed if traveling again. The oral vaccine is not recommended for children under 6 years old. The single-dose injectable vaccine (Typhim Vi) containing capsular polysaccharide antigen is available. The protection offered by this vaccine is effective starting 2 weeks after injection and should last for 2 years. Subsequent booster doses are recommended at 2-year intervals. This vaccine can be used in children as young as 2 years old. Side effects, while greater than those of the oral vaccine, are much less than those experienced with the old 2-dose injectable vaccine.People must know that if they have to avoid such a disease, it's their duty to create an effective health awareness program. Only few people can not control the threat. This is a program that must be organized at mass level and also in schools from time to time.

Treatment

As is said for all diseases, prevention is the best remedy. For typhoid, proper antibiotics have to be used. There is a growing frequency of resistant strains of the bacteria. Another treatment is to reduce symptoms by drinking more fluids. This prevents the dehydration that results from prolonged fever and diarrhoea. If a patient is severely dehydrated, he may need to to be given fluids intravenously. A patient must take a healthy diet. Non bulky, high-calorie meals can help replace the nutrients lost when people are sick. Even after treatment with antibiotics, some people who recover from typhoid fever continue to carry the bacteria in thier intestinal tract or gall bladder for years. Such people called chronic carriers. They carry the bacteria in thier feces (stools) and are capable of infecting others, although they no longer have signs or symptoms of the disease themselves.

People must take medical advice when they suspect that they have typhoid fever. If they become ill while traveling in a foreign country, immediately search for the list of doctors. It is always better to know in advance about medical care in the areas they have to visit, and keep a list of the names, addresses and phone numbers of recommended doctors. Doctors whether local or the State Medical society can help provide the required information. If someone develops signs and symptoms on his return home, consider consulting a doctor who focuses on international travel medicine or infectious diseases. A specialist will recognize and treat illness more quickly than a doctor who is not experienced in these areas. People must seek immediate assistance if they feel some symptoms of typhoid no matter where they are staying. Timely treatment helps save a life.

REMEMBER TYPHOID IS INFECTIOUS AND LIFE THREATENING ALWAYS GET PROMPT MEDICAL HELP IN TIME

TYPHOID

SOME FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW

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This pamphlet is produced in public interest by

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