

Summary

- Outbreak of *Salmonella typhi* in Auckland linked to the Mt. Albert Samoan Assembly of God church
- Be alert for potential cases; main symptoms include fever, headache, myalgia, constipation (sometimes diarrhoea), and abdominal pain.
- Send potential cases to Emergency Departments for assessment and treatment
- Please notify suspect cases to public health on **09 623 4600**
- Food workers with suspicious symptoms must stay away from work.

10 April 2017

Be alert for more cases of typhoid

18 confirmed cases in Auckland outbreak

An outbreak of typhoid (*Salmonella typhi*) in Auckland has seen 18 people hospitalised over the last three weeks. All cases have been acquired in New Zealand, and all appear to be linked to the Mt. Albert Samoan Assembly of God church, which met at Wesley Primary School in Mt. Roskill. All cases so far have been in the Pacific community. GPs, after hours medical staff and emergency department personnel are advised to be on the alert for potential cases.

Suspected cases should be referred to hospital emergency departments for urgent assessment and management. As the disease is spread primarily through food and water, any food workers with consistent symptoms should be kept from work until they can be assessed.

Typhoid is a systemic illness, usually transmitted via contaminated food and water, but transmission can also occur in households. It is characterised by persistent fever, headache, and malaise, often with myalgia. Initially it may present with non-specific symptoms, so can easily be missed. Gastrointestinal symptoms may appear and include abdominal pain (40%) and constipation (38%). Diarrhoea occurs in only around 10% of cases. Findings on examination can include fever, splenic and hepatic tenderness and enlargement and a 'rose spot' rash.

Good hand hygiene should also be emphasised as a primary means of avoiding infection.

Please also be aware that, although the size of this outbreak is unusual, we do get cases of typhoid throughout the year in Auckland, usually in people returning from overseas, particularly the Pacific Islands and India. Be on the lookout for typhoid in travellers returning after the Easter holidays.

For typhoid news, information and resources including translations in Samoan, please visit the Auckland Regional Public Health Service website <http://www.arphs.govt.nz/typhoid-response>.