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## OUTBREAK: TYPHOID FEVER

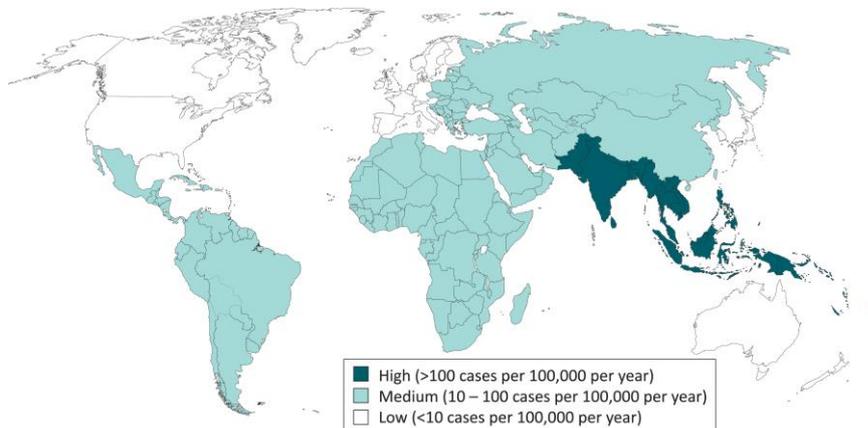
With the recent outbreak of typhoid fever in neighbouring Zimbabwe, it is a good time to brush up on the facts of this dangerous illness.

### What is Typhoid fever?

Typhoid fever is a serious disease caused by the bacterium *Salmonella typhi*. It is spread via contaminated food and water. Symptoms include long lasting fevers, weakness, stomach pain, headache and loss of appetite. Some patients have experienced constipation and rash. Internal bleeding and death is rare. Symptoms only appear 1-3 weeks following exposure. About 22 million cases of typhoid fever and about 200 000 related deaths occur worldwide every year, according to a study done in 2000.

### Where does Typhoid fever occur?

Typhoid fever is common in most parts of the world except in industrialised countries such as the USA, Japan and Australia. Therefore travellers are urged to be vaccinated for typhoid before entering developing countries, especially countries in south Asia. However, the typhoid vaccines are only 50-80% effective.



### Treatment:

Vaccination is your best line of defence. If you do become infected with *Salmonella typhi*, antibiotics can be prescribed. However, antibiotic resistance has become a big problem with this illness.

### Preventing the spread of typhoid fever:

- Vaccinate!
- It is essential that staff members that are experiencing the above mentioned are not allowed to work.
- Hands need to be washed regularly.

### Zimbabwe Outbreak Facts:

1. The outbreak began in December 2016 with the death of a 13 year old girl.
2. Typhoid Fever has so far claimed the lives of eight individuals in Harare.
3. The recent outbreak brings light to a larger national problem: a crisis in basic service delivery such as rubbish collection and water delivery.
4. Harare City Council has implemented a ban on the sale of food items to the public from all food vendors

## GREASE TRAP CLEANING PROCEDURES:

Recently we received a phone call requesting the proper procedures for cleaning grease traps. Although it is highly recommended that you hire a professional cleaning company to clean your grease trap and dispose of the waste in an ethical and regulated fashion, we have included a few steps on how to clean a trap yourself. Please note that this is a rough guide, and manufacturers cleaning recommendations should be advised. Grease traps need to be cleaned at least every 4-6 weeks.

### 1. Equipment needed:

- Gas mask
- Rubber gloves
- Protective clothing (coveralls, safety shoes etc.)
- Bucket and scoop
- Shop vacuum
- Large lined container or lined trash

### 2. Cleaning the trap:

- 2.1 Remove the lid
- 2.2 Observe how the internal parts are installed as you may have to reinstall them after cleaning the trap.
- 2.3 Grease sludge that forms at the top of the tank can be scooped out of the top and placed into the lined container/trash can.
- 2.4 The remaining contents must be then bailed out using a shop vacuum and placed into the lined container/trash can
- 2.5 Once the sludge and liquids have been removed, the lid, sides and baffles must be cleaned with a scraper. No hot water, degreasers or detergents can be used to clean the trap.
- 2.6 Remove all grease sludge from the intake and outtake outlets (pipes) where possible.
- 2.7 Replace all parts that may have been removed and the lid.
- 2.8 Kitty litter may be placed into the trash can to help solidify the grease sludge.
- 2.9 The bag of grease sludge must then be placed in an appropriate dumpster or designated receptacle. Note that is illegal to dump grease trap or kitchen waste into the sewer system, storm drains, ponds or outdoor areas.

### Information:

1. *Best practice is to keep fat oil and grease out of drains.*
2. *Grease traps should be checked regularly and emptied before it gets too full.*
3. *Grease trap baffles are what separate the flow of waste water in a grease trap tank. Fats, oils and grease are lighter than water and therefore, rise to the top of the tank, allowing cleaner water to pass through the trap before entering the sewer.*
4. *Dispose of grease in a safe and proper manner via a licenced waste contractor.*
5. *Records of all cleaning operations should be kept*



## TEMPERATURE RECORDS OF BUFFET FOODS

Over the past few years, more restaurants have started implementing buffet areas as a strategic move to improve their public appeal. The advantage of having a buffet is that it offers the customer a wide variety of food choices, which of course increases customer satisfaction. It can also assist with food cost when catering for larger numbers. However, various other factors, especially factors involving food temperature, need to be implemented by kitchen staff to ensure that the development of foodborne illnesses is reduced.

1. Do not display cold foods too far in advance, this will allow temperatures of food to increase rapidly.
2. Keep foods as cold or hot as possible (cold foods below 4°C; hot foods above 65°C), this is to ensure that no bacterial contaminants are given the opportunity to multiply.
3. Cold and hot holding facilities should be operational for keeping foods at the correct temperatures. The safest and best options for cold holding facilities would be an ice well, as all foods can be embedded into the ice thus maintaining an optimum temperature of 4°C For hot holding facilities, bain maries are one of the best solutions as these easily maintain the temperature of many types of (especially liquid or semi-liquid) foods (the water is constantly heated)
4. Most importantly, food temperatures should be taken **an hour in to service** in order to monitor the food temperatures. It is not useful to take food temperatures directly from fridge or production as these temperatures will have changed while on display.

For your own record keeping, please see <http://foodconsulting.co.za/documents/> for our food temperature checklist.

### Verifying your hand-held digital thermometer

Further experience has allowed us to slightly improve the below advice given in a recent newsletter.

1. Place a scoopful of ice cubes into a glass with a small amount of cold water (about 30ml) to facilitate melting. If necessary, crushed ice can be substituted.
2. Insert your thermometer within the iced water and allow the temperature to approximately stabilise.
3. Vigorous stirring is allowed and indeed encouraged to hasten the melting.
4. Record the lowest reading you get in the case of fluctuations.
5. For the hot reading, place a small pot on the stove or gas burner, add water and bring to the boil.
6. Alternatively, if you are boiling a non-greasy food (like rice or potatoes) this pot can be conveniently substituted instead. Make sure the thermometer is cleaned and sanitised before and after this.
7. Insert your thermometer within the boiling water, and allow the temperature to approximately stabilise.
8. The water must be on a rapid or "rolling" boil (i.e. bubbling on top) and you should carefully stir the thermometer in the water (be careful to avoid scalding).
9. Take the highest reading you get.

## GET TO KNOW FCS



NAME: Grant Lawrence

POSITION AT FCS: Company member (Western Cape)

COUNTRY OF BIRTH: South Africa

HIGHEST QUALIFICATION: B.sc (Honours) Microbiology

FAVOURITE NON WORK ACTIVITY: Reading, family time

FAVOURITE MUSIC/MUSICIAN/GROUP/BAND: Mozart, Planet Shakers

THE COUNTRY YOU WOULD LIKE TO EXPLORE THE MOST: Israel



NAME: Mohamed Cara

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FAVOURITE MUSIC/MUSICIAN/GROUP/BAND: Mariah Carey

### **Microbiology:**

*Our Microbiology lab boasts 32 SANAS accredited methods in accordance with ISO/IEC 17025:2005 and employs the service of qualified scientists and technicians. WE conduct a full range of Microbiological analyses on raw foodstuffs, cosmetics, ingredients, processed foods and food service products, for both human and animal consumption. We constantly strive to extend our scope of testing to fulfil the needs of our clients and introduce methods and high tech instruments to reduce the turnaround times and results. FCS makes use of the VIDAS® immunoassay system, which offers rapid and accurate detection of food pathogens.*