### Typhus Fever, Epidemic (*Rickettsia prowazekii*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instruction</th>
<th>Note</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Merlin disease code: 08000 Typhus Fever, Epidemic (<em>Rickettsia prowazekii</em>)</td>
<td>No paper case report form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specimens for all cases must be sent to the Bureau of Public Health Laboratories</td>
<td>No Merlin extended data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This condition has been identified as a potential bioterrorism agent by the CDC.*

### Clinical criteria for case classification

Several distinct *Rickettsia* species cause typhus fevers in humans. Each agent produces disease with a distinct epidemiology, but all cause illness, usually with fever, headache, or rash, or a combination of these.

### Laboratory criteria for case classification

Either of the following:
- Demonstration of *Rickettsia prowazekii* species in tissues or body fluids
- Or fourfold change in specific antibody titers in sequential sera.

### Epidemiological criteria for case classification

Not applicable.

### Case classification

**Confirmed:**
A clinically compatible illness in a person with laboratory criteria.

**Probable:**
A clinically compatible illness.

### Criteria to distinguish a new case from previous reports

Not applicable.