

To the Editor—We read with interest the comments on our paper “Typhoid osteomyelitis of spine is not ‘extremely rare’ ” in the *Hong Kong Medical Journal's* February 2007 issue.¹ We would like to emphasise that *Salmonella* osteomyelitis can be divided into two broad categories: typhoid osteomyelitis (caused by *Salmonella typhi* and *paratyphi*) and non-typhoid osteomyelitis, which differ epidemiologically. The writer said typhoid osteomyelitis is not extremely rare, supporting this with several references,²⁻⁷ but all the cases mentioned in these references were of non-typhoid osteomyelitis.

The writer also claimed that vertebral typhoid osteomyelitis is common in immunocompromised patients citing Santos and Sapico² to support this. In the

section on underlying causes in this paper, there was no mention of whether *Salmonella typhi* was involved or not. We were surprised that the writer came to the conclusion that it was a case of typhoidal osteomyelitis. Hence, we think there has been a misunderstanding about osteomyelitis caused by typhoid and non-typhoid salmonellas.

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