

## Emergence of human-adapted *Salmonella enterica* is linked to the Neolithization process

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### Abstract

© 2020, The Author(s), under exclusive licence to Springer Nature Limited. It has been hypothesized that the Neolithic transition towards an agricultural and pastoralist economy facilitated the emergence of human-adapted pathogens. Here, we recovered eight *Salmonella enterica* subsp. *enterica* genomes from human skeletons of transitional foragers, pastoralists and agropastoralists in western Eurasia that were up to 6,500 yr old. Despite the high genetic diversity of *S. enterica*, all ancient bacterial genomes clustered in a single previously uncharacterized branch that contains *S. enterica* adapted to multiple mammalian species. All ancient bacterial genomes from prehistoric (agro-)pastoralists fall within a part of this branch that also includes the human-specific *S. enterica* Paratyphi C, illustrating the evolution of a human pathogen over a period of 5,000 yr. Bacterial genomic comparisons suggest that the earlier ancient strains were not host specific, differed in pathogenic potential and experienced convergent pseudogenization that accompanied their downstream host adaptation. These observations support the concept that the emergence of human-adapted *S. enterica* is linked to human cultural transformations.

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