

HEALTH ADVISORY

CHOLERA

Look for these symptoms:

- Acute watery diarrhea with severe dehydration
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Leg cramps

Symptoms of Severe Dehydration

- Sunken eyes
- Dry-mouth
- Shriveled-skin
- Extreme thirst
- Reduced urine output

- Cholera is caused by *Vibrio Cholerae* and is closely linked to poor sanitation including open defecation and unsafe drinking water.
- It is transmitted through contaminated water or food.
- It can take few hours to 5 days for symptoms to appear after infection. Symptoms typically appear in 2-3 days.
- Approximately one in ten infected persons will have severe disease characterized by profuse watery diarrhea, vomiting and leg cramps.
- It can rapidly lead to severe dehydration and death if left untreated.
- An estimated 3 - 5 million cases and over 100,000 deaths occur each year around the world.

	Do's	Don'ts
Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain hygiene in preparation and storage of food and promote breastfeeding in children. • Eat foods that are packaged or that are freshly cooked and served hot. • Drink only sealed bottled, boiled, or chemically treated water and bottled or canned carbonated beverages. • Disinfect your own water: boil or filter the water and add 2 drops of liquid chlorine per liter of water or a tablet (iodine / chlorine) as per the recommended dose. • Wash your hands often with soap and clean water esp., before you eat or prepare food and after using the bathroom. • If no water and soap are available, use an alcohol-based hand cleaner (with at least 60% alcohol). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid tap water, fountain drinks, and ice cubes. • Don't take bottled drinks if the seal is broken. • Do not eat raw and undercooked meats and seafood or unpeeled fruits and vegetables. • Do not drink water from leaking water pipes • Do not eat stale food, rotten vegetables and cut fruits which are open. • Don't eat food which is exposed to dust, houseflies etc. • Do not throw garbage and other waste on road, footpath and drains which will attract flies and cause cholera.
Treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take plenty of small sips of water, rice water, pulse or oral rehydration solution. • Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS) is available in sachets in a chemist shop without a prescription. They can be readily dissolved in a liter of normal water for intake. • If you're breastfeeding or bottle feeding your baby and they have diarrhea, you should continue to feed them as normal. • Try to eat potatoes, rice, bananas, soup and boiled vegetables. Salty foods help the most. • Seek immediate medical care if you develop severe diarrhea, vomiting or both, blurred vision, breathing difficulties, light headedness etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not take antibiotics available over the counter. • If you have kidney, heart, or liver disease and have to limit fluids visit your doctor for consultation. • Fruit juice or fizzy drinks should be avoided as they can make diarrhea worse in children. • Avoid spicy foods, fruits, alcohol, and caffeine until 48 hours after all symptoms have disappeared. • Avoid chewing gum that contains sorbitol. • Avoid milk for 3 days after symptoms disappear • Do not take antidiarrheal medicines if there is blood or mucus in your stool or you have fever.

About Vaccine

- Currently available oral cholera vaccines (OCV) are safe and offer good protection (over 70%) for an acceptable period of time (at least one year).
- The two-dose OCV is currently not indicated for use once an outbreak has started.
- The use of OCV is considered as an additional public health tool to usually recommended cholera control measures such as provision of safe water and adequate sanitation.
- Protective efficacy for single dose vaccine (CVD 103-HgR, Orochol-E) is usually attained in 8 days whereas it takes 10 days for two dose vaccine (WC/rBS, Dukoral®) after the last dose.

Source: www.who.int/cholera/en/