

Say NO! to CHOLERA



What is Cholera?

Cholera is a type of bacteria which makes people get watery diarrhoea when they drink or eat it. Bacteria are tiny, living cells which are so small you can't see them without a microscope. The bacteria get into the water when dead bodies or toilets are too close to the water supply. People who drink the water with cholera bacteria in it will then get sick. The cholera bacteria can also be on the ground, or anywhere someone with cholera has been, and if you touch things and then touch food or your mouth you can easily eat the bacteria without even knowing it, and get sick.



Water:

Safe water: Make sure that all pit or emergency toilets are at least 30 meters away from your water supply. This is because there are lots of cholera bacteria in human waste, especially in diarrhoea. Some people who have cholera don't get very sick, but these people still have lots of cholera on them and in their waste which can infect other people. This means that even if someone seems quite healthy they can still make you or your children sick without even knowing it. It is also very important to bury dead people far away from the water supply because dead bodies have cholera bacteria on them which can get into the soil and into your water supply and make you sick.

Clean water: Do not drink untreated water. To make water safe for drinking, boil it or chlorinate it. Avoid ice because it could have been made with unclean water.



How can I help my family avoid cholera?

Make sure that nothing which comes near your mouth could have cholera bacteria on it. This means making sure that everyone's hands are clean, the water you all drink is safe, and has been boiled and treated, and that the food you eat is cleaned and cooked properly.



Hands:

Wash your hands with soap and water after going to the toilet, after visiting sick people, before cooking and eating and after touching rubbish. To wash your hands properly first wet them with water, then put soap all over them and rub them together for at least 1 minute, and then wash the soap off well. Although water is hard to get and difficult to carry, it really is important you get enough water for washing with as well as drinking and cooking.



Food:

When preparing food, make sure that everything you are using has been cleaned in hot water with detergent. This includes pots, knives, forks, spoons, plates, cups and anything else that touches the food you will eat. When cooking food, make sure that it is cooked in the middle. Even the middle of the food has to be heated to at least 75 degrees Celsius in order to kill all the cholera bacteria. Only use clean, treated water for cooking. Please be extra careful when cooking seafood like fish and shellfish because they can have lots of cholera bacteria on them. Make sure you cook them properly. This means cooking them for 15 minutes at 70 degrees Celsius, or several minutes boiling temperature (100 degrees).

If you must eat raw foods like salads and fruits, make sure that they are washed properly in clean, treated water. Keep raw foods away from cooked foods, and don't let clean raw foods touch things which aren't clean. Remember to ask everyone to wash their hands before eating.