



Cholera Fact Sheet for Parents and Schools

May 2015

Which areas in Kenya have been affected by cholera?

Since December 2014, a cholera outbreak has affected 7 counties including Mombasa and Nakuru counties. In Nairobi cholera has been limited to urban settlement areas.

What is cholera disease?

Cholera is a bacterial disease with watery vomiting and diarrhoea that may look like cloudy rice water. Patients may become very dehydrated within hours if not treated. Young children living in endemic areas are most affected by the disease, but any age group may suffer.

How does cholera spread?

The disease is spread mainly by fecal (stool) contamination of water and food. The disease is not likely to spread directly from one person to another; this means that casual contact with an infected person is not a risk for becoming ill.

How can you prevent cholera in your family?

Drink and use safe water (chlorinated or bottled with an unbroken seal). Wash hands with soap and safe water thoroughly before eating and after using the toilet. Ensure optimal hygiene in kitchen, bathroom and washing areas. [More details](#). Ensure you follow the [five cholera prevention messages](#).

How is cholera treated?

Most people infected with the cholera organism have mild diarrhea or no symptoms at all. Only a small proportion—about 5% to 10% of those infected—may have illness requiring treatment at a clinic. With proper treatment, even severely ill patients can be saved with oral rehydration therapy, zinc and (sometimes) antibiotics. To learn more, watch these [CDC videos](#) on prevention and treatment of cholera.

Is there a vaccine available?

Yes, a cholera vaccine is available. The vaccine is called Shancol (made by Sanofi Pasteur). It is given orally to children 1 year of age or older in 2 divided doses 2 weeks apart. A booster can be given every 3 years.

WHO position on oral cholera vaccines

Immunization with these vaccines should be used in conjunction with other prevention and control strategies in areas where the disease is endemic and should be considered in areas at risk for outbreaks. Although all age groups are vulnerable to cholera, immunization should target high-risk children aged at least 1 year. Because the vaccines are 2-dose vaccines, several weeks can elapse before people who receive the vaccines are protected. Vaccines offer incomplete (about 66%) protection. For this reason, vaccination should not replace standard prevention and control measures.

Please call our clinic nurse on 0722-519-863 for more information about prevention of cholera or vaccination for your child.

Reference: [Centers for Disease Control & Prevention](#) and [FAQs about cholera](#)

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