



CHOLERA THE FACTS

Cholera is an acute diarrhoeal disease that can kill within hours if left untreated. It is caused by ingestion of food or water contaminated with the bacterium *Vibrio cholerae*.

Cholera is transmitted through contaminated water or food.

Symptoms

Cholera is characterised in its most severe form by a sudden onset of acute watery diarrhoea that can lead to death by severe dehydration. The extremely short incubation period - two hours to five days - enhances the potentially explosive pattern of outbreaks, as the number of cases can rise very quickly. About 75% of people infected with cholera do not develop any symptoms.

To prevent Cholera:

- Wash hands with running water and soap before eating, after visiting the toilet, and before cooking
- Every family member should use a toilet/pit latrine to prevent contamination of food and water by faeces containing Cholera
- Thoroughly wash fruits and vegetables before eating or cooking
- Disinfect any materials or clothes contaminated with faeces or vomit using appropriate chemicals
- Use disinfectants to wash clothes and beddings used by Cholera patients. Washing infected clothes in rivers or lakes will spread Cholera
- Dispose faeces and vomit from every person including children in a toilet. Faeces poses the greatest transmission risk for cholera
- Whenever possible eat your food while it's still hot
- Only drink water that has been treated. As a safety precaution, boil drinking water fetched from the tap or treat it using appropriate chemicals
- Flies and dust can carry Cholera germs to food. Keep food covered at all times