

Traveller Information Sheet

Cholera Information Sheet.

What is cholera?

Cholera is caused by a form of bacteria called *Vibrio Cholerae*. Cholera causes profuse watery diarrhoea that can lead to rapid dehydration. Death can occur within hours if not treated.

How do you get cholera?

Cholera affects only humans. It is transmitted either directly or indirectly from human to human, therefore eating contaminated food or drinking contaminated water are modes of infection. Most travellers are not at increased or direct risk. Humanitarian workers in refugee camps may be at increased risk.

What are the symptoms?

The symptoms of cholera range from only diarrhoea, to profuse watery diarrhoea with nausea and vomiting. In severe cases rapid dehydration can occur within a few hours, death may follow if medical treatment is not started.

How do you treat cholera?

Fluid replenishment must occur immediately. Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS) may be started until medical care can be accessed. If left untreated death may occur due to circulatory collapse.

ORS solution:

In case ORS packets are not available, homemade solutions consisting of either half a small spoon of salt and six level small spoons of sugar dissolved in one litre of safe water.

Can I be vaccinated against cholera?

An oral vaccine is available. The name of the vaccine is Dukoral

Dukoral is an oral vaccine.

Food and drink should be avoided for 1 hour before and 1 hour after administration of the inactivated cholera vaccine.

Children aged 2–6 years

Three doses are required, given a minimum of 1 week and up to 6 weeks apart. If an interval of more than 6 weeks occurs between any of the doses, re-start the vaccination course.

- After dissolving the buffer granules in 150 mL of water, half the solution is then poured away and the entire contents of the vaccine vial are mixed with the remaining 75 mL for administration.

Adults and children aged >6 years

Two doses are required, given a minimum of 1 week and up to 6 weeks apart. If the 2nd dose is not administered within 6 weeks, re-start the vaccination course.

- After dissolving the buffer granules in 150 mL of water, the contents of the vaccine vial are then added to the solution for administration.

How else do I avoid getting cholera?

Precautions should be taken to avoid consumption of potentially contaminated food, drinks and water. Oral rehydration solution (ORS) should be carried to combat dehydration and electrolyte depletion in case of severe diarrhoea.

References

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