

# CHOLERA ALERT!!!

## 1. What is Cholera?

- Cholera is an infectious disease that causes severe watery diarrhoea and vomiting, which can lead to dehydration (severe loss of body fluids and electrolytes) and even death if untreated.
- Cholera is caused by eating food or drinking water contaminated with bacterium *Vibrio Cholerae*.

## 2. Mode of transmission (spread) of Cholera

- Cholera is caused by ingesting water or food contaminated with faeces containing Cholera germs (*Vibrio Cholerae*).
- Cholera germs can be transmitted on unwashed hands, in untreated water, raw and leftover foods, and by flies.
- Coming into contact with an infected person or dead body.
- Swimming in contaminated water.

## 3. Signs and Symptoms of Cholera

- Sudden watery diarrhoea with or without vomiting.
- Stool or vomit is watery like rice water and may have a fishy smell.
- An untreated person with Cholera may produce 10 to 20 litres of diarrhoea a day.
- Thirsty.
- Sunken eyes.
- Loss of skin elasticity (inability of skin to return to the original position quickly if pinched).
- Dry mouth, including throat, nose and eyelids.
- Low blood pressure.
- Muscle cramps.

## 4. Prevention and What to do when suspecting Cholera

- Drinking water from a safe source or disinfected water (boiled or chlorinated) only.
- Avoid eating uncooked food unless it can be peeled or shelled.
- Cook food or re-heat it thoroughly, and eat it while still hot.
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and ash under safe running water after using the toilet and before handling, preparing or eating food.
- Dispose of human and children excreta/faeces in a recommended toilet.
- Prevent fly breeding by disposing refuse in a pit and covering it well with soil.
- Wash fruits and vegetables using safe water before eating them.
- Contact local authorities or nearest health facility immediately when someone dies of Cholera, do not touch or wash the dead body.
- If in contact with dead body or its excretions, clean your hands thoroughly with safe, running water and soap.
- At funeral ceremonies make sure handwashing facilities are available with safe water and soap and only safe food and water is consumed (avoid handshaking).
- Suspecting Cholera, make salt and sugar solution and drink 1 litre per 10kg body weight and rush to the nearest health facility, whilst taking the salt and

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sugar solution. Continue giving breast milk only, to a baby from birth up to 6 months of age who has diarrhoea/Cholera.