

## How to identify cholera

Cholera is a severe form of diarrhea caused by bacteria in water.

The symptoms of cholera are:

- Diarrhea “like rice water” in very large quantities
- Vomiting
- Leg cramps
- Weakness

Diarrhea and vomiting can lead very quickly to severe dehydration and shock. Without treatment, death can occur within hours.

## How to prevent cholera

Cholera spreads very quickly and can lead to many deaths. Cholera can be prevented through sanitation and careful use and treatment of water before drinking or cooking.

### **WATER:**

- **DO NOT DRINK UNTREATED WATER.** Treat water using at least 2 methods:
  - Filtering through fabric, sand or other material **and** boiling
  - Filtering through fabric, sand or other material **and** adding lime juice
  - Filtering through fabric, sand or other material **and** adding chlorine
- Keep water containers clean and do not put hands or containers in drinking water.

### **FOOD:**

- Eat only thoroughly cooked food and eat it while it is hot. Take extra precautions to cook fish and shellfish very well before consumption.
- Wash vegetables and fruit in treated water before use, or peel them if there is no water.
- Do not let infected persons handle food and vessels.

### **SANITATION:**

- Always wash carefully after handling dead bodies and debris.
- Build emergency sanitation facilities at least 30 meters from any water source.
- **ALWAYS** wash hands after using the toilet.
- **ALWAYS** wash hands before cooking & before eating.

### **Preparing an Emergency Pit Latrine**

While a more permanent latrine is being built, a simple pit can be dug as a temporary solution for the disposal of human excreta. It should measure 0.3 x 0.3 meter, have a depth of 0.5 meters, and be at least 30 meters from a well or other source of drinking water. Where possible, the pit should be at least 6 meters from the nearest house. It should not be located uphill from the water source or dug in marshy soil. The bottom of the pit should never penetrate the groundwater table. After each use, a layer of soil should be laid down in the pit. In an area affected by cholera, the pit should also be coated each day with a layer of chunamb.

## How to treat cholera


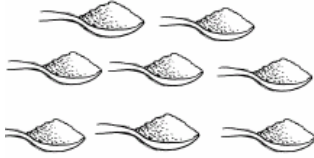




The most important treatment for cholera is ORAL REHYDRATION. Except in severe cases, antibiotics will not help at all. When a person has watery diarrhea or diarrhea and vomiting, do not wait for signs of dehydration. Act quickly.

**Give lots of liquids to drink such as** a thin porridge, soup, water or rehydration drink.

**Keep giving food.** As soon as the sick child (or adult) can eat, give frequent feedings of foods. To babies, keep giving breast milk often. If not possible give the other liquids mentioned.

**Rehydration drink** helps to prevent or treat dehydration. It does not cure cholera or diarrhea, but may give enough time for the illness to go away by itself.

If ORS packets are not available, here are 2 ways to make an Oral Rehydration Solution.

<p><b>1. Made with powdered rice, or boiled and mashed potatoes and salt.</b></p> <p>Take 4 tumblers (1 litre) of boiled water</p>  <p>Add 8 heaped teaspoons of powdered rice or boiled &amp; mashed potatoes.</p>  <p>Add half a level teaspoon of SALT</p>  <p>Boil for 5 minutes to form a <b>watery</b> porridge. Cool the drink quickly and begin to give it to the sick person.</p>	<p><b>2. Made with sugar and salt.</b></p> <p>Take 4 tumblers (1 litre) of boiled water</p>  <p>Add 8 level teaspoons of SUGAR. Mix well.</p>  <p>Add half a level teaspoon of SALT.</p>  <p>Before adding the sugar, taste the drink and be sure it is less salty than tears.</p>
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If you can, add half a cup of coconut water or mashed ripe banana to either drink. These contain potassium which helps a sick person accept more food and drink.

Give the child sips of this drink every 5 minutes, day and night, until he begins to urinate normally. An adult needs 3 or more liters a day. A small child usually needs at least 1 liter a day, or 1 glass for each watery stool. **Keep giving the drink often** in small sips. Even if the person vomits, not all of the drink will be vomited.

**SEEK PROFESSIONAL MEDICAL ASSISTANCE AT THE EARLIEST.**