

CHOLERA: MESSAGES

LAST UPDATE: MARCH 2022

About the Message Library

People affected by disaster must have access to timely, appropriate and accurate information to help them keep themselves and their families safe and well. They should know their rights, entitlements and be able to give feedback. Responders have a duty to put in place appropriate, systematic and coordinated mechanisms to ensure this.

Our Message Library offers clear, concise and simple messages on a range of topics as templates for you to adapt and use in the context you are working in. These are intended to help you make a quick start on communicating with communities while you further develop mechanisms for on-going dialogue with diverse groups within each community.

For help contextualising and using the messages we recommend you do our e-learning course and read the following technical guidance.

E-learning

<https://kayaconnect.org/course/info.php?id=768>

Guidance

<https://www.cdacnetwork.org/tools-guidance/cdac-message-library-user-guidance>

What is cholera?

Cholera is a serious infectious disease caused by eating contaminated food or drinking water. If left untreated cholera can kill within hours and is especially dangerous in young children.

Symptoms

Many people who have cholera do not show any symptoms. Of those who do, some vomit or develop frequent watery diarrhoea that looks like rice water. This can lead to death, if left untreated.

How is cholera spread

Cholera is spread through contaminated water and food and from stools/faeces or vomit from an infected person. Cholera outbreaks occur often in emergencies when communities are displaced and live in crowded, unsanitary conditions without access to safe drinking water.

How to prevent cholera

You can prevent cholera by adopting safe hygiene practices. These include using safe drinking water and washing hands with soap thoroughly before eating, feeding your child and preparing food and after defecation. If there is no soap available you can use ash and running water. You should also dispose of all faeces by burying it in the ground away from water sources or covering it up.

Treatment for cholera

Cholera is easy to treat but it's important to act fast. Most people can be cured by drinking a solution with a substance called oral rehydration salts (ORS). It is a powder that when added to safe water helps the body replace lost fluids. If the patient has a severe case of cholera, they may be given fluids through a drip and pills to shorten the duration on the infection.

Seeking treatment for cholera

If you think you or a member of your family has cholera, do not panic. Cholera can be cured. Go to your nearest health facility immediately. Drink as much as you can on the way. Your nearest health facility or treatment centre is at [insert info].

What are Cholera Treatment Centres?

Cholera treatment centres are set up for people who have cholera to get better. Going to a treatment centre is one of the best ways to cure cholera and stop it spreading.

Attitude towards cholera

Don't be ashamed of cholera. It can be treated easily if you get medical help quickly. Contact [insert info] to find out where your nearest cholera treatment centre is.

Safe removal of dead bodies

To reduce the spread of infection, funerals for people who die of cholera should be held quickly and near the place of death. Those who wash the body should not prepare the food. People who have prepared the body should wash their hands with soap or ash afterwards. Contact [insert info] for more information.

REFERENCES

For more information on this topic, we recommend you read the following references.

World Health Organization (2022). **Cholera.**
https://www.who.int/health-topics/cholera#tab=tab_1

World Health Organization (2019). **Factsheet: Cholera.**
<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/cholera>

World Health Organization (2019). **Factsheet: Sanitation.**
<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/sanitation>

HELP US KEEP THE LIBRARY UP TO DATE

If you would like to contribute to topic reviews, have found a message that needs greater clarity, or wish to create a new topic, please contact us at info@cdacnetwork.org.