

Trainers Guide to Diarrhoea & Cholera

Transmission of Diarrhoea:

1. The transmission of faeces to mouth is called the Faecal – Oral Route through 5 main routes, known as the '5 F's':
 1. Fingers – touching food with dirty hands
 2. Flies- walking on faeces and then on human food
 3. Fluids (Water): Contaminated by *ecoli*
 4. Food: contaminated by bacteria
 5. Fruit: contaminated by germs.

Diarrhoea comes in many different forms:

PREVENTION OF DIARRHOEA & CHOLERA

1. Wash hands with soap before touching food.
2. Protect the food of flies by good conservation.
3. Ensure that flies do not have access to feces.
4. Only eat the fruit if they are well washed or peeled.
5. Keep fields and yard free of human and animal fecal matter.
6. Ensure that drinking water is not contaminated with fecal matter.

Transmission of Cholera:

1. Cholera is an acute intestinal infection caused by ingestion of food or water contaminated with the bacterium *Vibrio cholerae*.
2. Cholera is mainly transmitted through contaminated water and food and is closely linked to poor environmental management.
3. The absence or shortage of safe water and sufficient sanitation combined with a generally poor environmental status are the main causes of spread of the disease.
4. Cholera can also be transmitted through poor hygiene, therefore hand washing with soap is important to preventing its spread.
5. The infection is usually mild or without symptoms, but it can sometimes be severe.
6. Cholera has a short incubation period that can range from 2 hours to 5 days.
7. The bacterium stays in an infected person for 7-14 days and is then shed back into the environment through human faeces.
8. If left untreated, Cholera can kill quickly as patients suffer from severe dehydration, particularly children under the age of 5.

Symptoms:

Diarrhoea is defined as the passage of three or more loose or liquid stools per day. It does not include the loose, "pasty" stools by breastfed babies. There are three clinical types of diarrhoea:

- acute watery diarrhoea – lasts several hours or days, and includes cholera;
- acute bloody diarrhoea – also called dysentery; and
- persistent diarrhoea – lasts 14 days or more.

Symptoms:

It is difficult to identify cholera as different from other forms of diarrhoea without a stool sample that identifies the bacteria. However, the common signs/symptoms are:

1. Copious, painless and watery diarrhoea.
2. Nausea and vomiting.
3. Severe stomach and leg cramps.
4. Severe dehydration
5. Death, if dehydration is not treated promptly.

Treatment

For emergency treatment give ORS or SSS (See Guide to Dehydration) and seek advice from Health Centre