

CDRS

Communicable Disease Reporting System

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE FACT SHEET

CHOLERA

Cholera is an acute, diarrheal illness caused by infection of the intestine with the bacterium *Vibrio cholerae*.

Symptoms

Symptoms usually start 2-3 days after exposure and include:

- Sudden onset of severe watery diarrhea
- Occasional vomiting and cramping
- Dehydration (loss of fluids), if not treated
- In severe untreated cases, death may occur in a few hours.

Transmission

- Mainly through drinking water contaminated with bowel movements or vomit from infected people.
- Also through direct contact with the stools (bowel movements) of infected people.
- Eating raw or undercooked seafood from polluted waters.
- Eating other foods that have been contaminated by dirty water, stool, soiled hands, or flies.

Treatment

- The bacteria can be cultured from the stool.
- Mild or moderate cases - Give the person plenty of fluids to drink by mouth.
- Severe cases - IV fluid therapy and antibiotics.

Prevention

- Follow travelers' advisories if you travel in countries reporting cholera:
 - Drink only bottled, carbonated water or boiled water.
 - If tap water is the only source, boil or treat water with chlorine.
 - Avoid drinks with ice that may have been made with untreated water.
 - Avoid uncooked vegetables and fruit. Fruit with intact peels (bananas and oranges) that you can peel yourself are safe.
 - Eat only cooked foods that are served hot.
 - After cooking or boiling food/water, protect against contamination by flies.
 - Avoid food and drinks from street vendors.
- Avoid raw or undercooked meats, particularly seafood.
- Pay attention to personal hygiene, especially washing hands with soap and water before meals.

All information is general in nature and is not intended to be used as a substitute for appropriate professional advice.

Franklin County



Board of Health

Report Disease With Ease - 24 hours a day

www.cdinfo.com

Columbus and Franklin County Communicable Disease Reporting System

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