Cholera is an acute, diarrhoeal illness caused by the bacterium *Vibrio cholerae*.

**Mode of transmission**

A person may get cholera by drinking water or eating food that is contaminated with the cholera bacterium. The source of the contamination is usually the faeces of an infected person, or water contaminated with sewage.

**Symptoms**

The infection is often mild or without symptoms, but sometimes it can be severe.

- Watery diarrhoea
- Profuse vomiting

⚠️ In severe cases rapid loss of body fluids leads to dehydration and shock that might cause death.

**Treatment**

Patients can be treated with oral rehydration solution and/or intake of liquids in large amounts. Severe cases also require intravenous fluids.

Washing hands with soap and water is the basis of health.
**Prevention**

### Drink and use safe water/Eat safe food

- Boil water, and bring it to a complete boil for at least 1 minute
- Use one of the locally available water treatment products, or if not available, add 2 drops of household bleach for every 1 litre of water and wait 30 minutes before drinking
- Boil water: Make sure to bring it to a complete boil for at least 1 minute

- Cook food well for at least 30 minutes, and covered, at 60 °C
- Eat food hot, and peel fruits and vegetables

### Wash your hands often with soap and safe water

- Before you eat or prepare food
- After using the latrine or toilet
- After taking care of someone who has diarrhoea, touching them, their stools, vomit or clothes
- If no soap is available, scrub hands often with ash or sand and rinse with clean water

### Use latrines or bury faeces; do not defecate in any body of water

- Use latrines or other sanitation facilities, to dispose of faeces
- Keep the latrine clean
- If no latrine is available, defecate at least 30 metres away from any source of water and then bury the faeces properly
- Dig new latrines or temporary pit toilets at least half a metre deep and 30 metres away from any body of water

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⚠️ **Clean up safely:** in the kitchen or where you prepare food. Wash yourself, children, diapers and clothes, 30 metres away from drinking-water sources.