

Current major events

No major outbreak from meningococcal disease

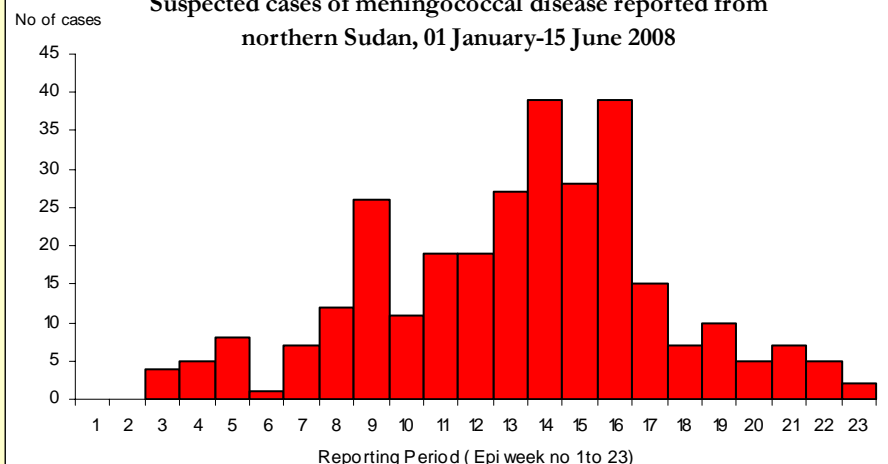
The 2007-2008 epidemic season for meningococcal disease (MCD) is passing off in Sudan without any major outbreak being reported from the country either from its northern part or from southern Sudan. The epidemic season for MCDs, normally, starts in November and stretches as long as the rainy season begins in June-July in the country.

Suspected cases of meningococcal diseases (MCD), though, occurred sporadically through out the current epidemic season in Sudan, no major outbreak was recorded. Between 01 January to 15 June 2008 only 2,94 suspected cases of MCDs including 12 deaths (CFR: 4%) were reported by the Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH) of Sudan. However, localized outbreaks from MCDs were detected in one of the sectors (district) of North Kordofan state as well as in Nertiti IDP camp of West Darfur prompting for mass vaccination campaign in these two areas. The causative strain for these two localized outbreaks were *N. meningitidis* serogroup-A. About 20,000 IDPs were vaccinated in Nertiti IDP camp while 60,407 people in the high risk age group (2-30 yrs) in Abuza-bed district were vaccinated to contain these two localized outbreaks.

Editorial note

Sudan, being the only country in the EMR that falls within the African Meningitis Belt, faces recurrence of epidemic MCDs during the dry season every year. Although there is a general belief that epidemic waves occur in cycles of 5-12 years, Sudan has not faced a major epidemic from MCD since 1999 (Please see the table). Several factors like spread of a new strains, the extent and frequency of previous vaccination campaigns and climatic and environmental factors may shorten this inter-epidemic period. During the current epidemic season, low levels of epidemic meningitis activities have been observed throughout the

Suspected cases of meningococcal disease reported from northern Sudan, 01 January-15 June 2008



Suspected cases of MCDs reported from Sudan in last 10 years

Year	Cases	Deaths	CFR
1999	33,664	2508	7.5
2000	5,076	468	9.2
2001	2,252	336	14.9
2002	2,407	455	18.9
2003	1,436	158	11.0
2004	1,133	175	15.4
2005	3,703	124	3.3
2006	2,617	91	3.4
2007	2,297	115	5.0
2008	294	12	4.0

Source: FMOH, Sudan

- Cases and deaths do not include data from southern Sudan;
- The data for 2008 is only upto 15 June 2008;

countries of African Meningitis Belt including in Sudan. However, after several years of low disease incidence in Sudan, the 2006-2007 epidemic season saw a marked rise in meningitis attack rate in Sudan, particularly in its southern part. Moreover, the country has seen repeated attacks from epidemic MCD caused by *N. meningitidis* serogroup-W135 in Darfur in last three consecutive years. This year, also, one strain of NMW135 was isolated from one of the IDP camps in South Darfur raising fear that this strain is still circulating in the area. The association of these epidemiological factors makes it highly likely that a new epidemic wave may well hit the country in next few years. Therefore, letting down the guard or slackening epidemic preparedness against MCD could bring about catastrophic results.

Update on outbreaks

in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

Dengue: in Yemen. No update available. **Myiasis:** in Djibouti. No update. **Cholera;** in south Sudan. **Hepatitis –E:** in Red sea state of Sudan

Current public health events of international concern

[cumulative N° of cases (deaths), CFR %]

Avian influenza

Egypt	[50 (22), 44%]
Indonesia	[135 (110), 81.4%]

Cholera

Sudan (South)	[5953 (50), 0.83%]*
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Dengue fever

Yemen	[1001 (?), ?%]
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Myiasis

Djibouti	[932(0), 0%]
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Hepatitis E

Sudan	[224(23), 10.2%]*
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Poliomyelitis (WPV1)

Nigeria (North)	[1 (0), 0%]
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Hand, foot & mouth disease

China	[7823(23), 0.3%]
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(* = Unofficial figures)
CFR = Case-Fatality Rate