



CHOLERA AWARENESS NEWSLETTER



Cholera

The Gauteng Department of Health (GDoH) recently confirmed twenty-three (23) people have lost their lives since the cholera outbreak in Hammanskraal, north of Pretoria. Sizwe-Hosmed Medical Scheme calls for its members to stay vigilant as cholera can spread easily and rapidly when necessary hygiene and rehydration measures are not practiced. In this article, your scheme shares what you need to know about Cholera and how you can protect yourself and your loved ones.



WHAT IS CHOLERA?

Cholera is an acute intestinal infection caused by the bacteria known as *Vibrio Cholera*. The bacteria causes watery diarrhoea that can lead to dehydration and death in less than 24 hours if left untreated.

HOW DO YOU GET CHOLERA?

Cholera infection can be caused by:

- Drinking contaminated water
- Eating contaminated food



SYMPTOMS AND SIGNS OF CHOLERA

Mild symptoms go away in a few days. Severe infection symptoms show within 12 hours to five days of contracting Cholera bacteria and include:

- Passing loose watery stool (watery diarrhoea)
- Intense thirst with little urine passed
- Muscle cramps and weakness
- Restlessness/irritability
- Vomiting

CHOLERA PREVENTION

- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water before and after using the bathroom and preparing or eating any food.
- During outbreaks, use only treated, boiled or bottled water to drink and when preparing food.
- Wash fruits and vegetables with clean water.
- Dispose safely the nappies and human faeces.



CHOLERA TREATMENT

- The mainstay of cholera treatment is to prevent or reverse dehydration. You are advised to seek medical attention as soon as you suspect contact with contaminated water or food or as soon as you experience watery diarrhoea.
- For mild cases: Oral Rehydration (Stir and dissolve six level teaspoons of sugar, half level teaspoon of salt in a litre of previously boiled water)
- For severe cases: Intravenous fluids and Antibiotics
- Zinc syrup in children younger than 5 years

BE VIGILANT, STAY SAFE, PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR LOVED ONES!