



The Republic of Uganda

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

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PRESS RELEASE

Update on interventions to contain cholera outbreak in Uganda

KAMPALA, 06/09/2019– The Ministry of Health would like to inform the general public of an active Cholera outbreak affecting five districts in Uganda. The affected districts are; Kyegegwa, Bududa, Kisoro, Isingiro and Busia where cases have been reported. To-date, a cumulative total of 241 cases and 2 deaths has been recorded over the last three months.

Since June 2019, Cholera has been reported in five districts namely; Bududa (66 cases, 1 deaths), Kyegegwa (25 cases 0 deaths), Kisoro 20 suspected cases, Isingiro 118 cases with 1 death.

This week (3rd September 2019), 12 cases with 0 deaths were investigated and Cholera was confirmed among patients who reported at Nabulola Health Center III and Dubani Mission Hospital in Busia district.

With exception of Bududa and Busia, the cholera outbreak in the other districts are linked to refugee settlements i.e. – Kyaka II (in Kyegegwa District) Nakivale, (in Isingiro District) and Oruchinga (in Kisoro District).

In order to contain these outbreaks, the Ministry of Health working with the respective local governments and Development Partners is carrying out the following measures to avert further spread of the outbreak. The interventions in place are;

- Intensified health education for hygiene improvement, with emphasis on hand washing with water and soap, keeping clean homes, covering food, and eating food that is hot.
- Promotion of use of safe water and construction of latrines in affected communities and those at high risk
- Investigate all the outbreaks to identify the risk factors. Most of the outbreaks have been attributed due use of contaminated water, poor sanitation characterized by open defecation, and poor personal and domestic hygiene
- Established cholera treatment centres in each of the affected districts for management of cases.
- Strengthened coordination to monitor progress on outbreak control measures through both national and district task force meetings
- Provided additional medicines to replenish the stock already used in affected districts
- For the districts such as; Bududa which faced a landslide, targeted Oral Cholera Vaccination (OCV) was carried out in 23 parishes where cases were reported.

- Conduct active search to identify cases at home, to treat and protect the cholera contacts

However, the Ministry of Health would like to state that with the beginning of the second rainy season (September – November) contamination of water sources and floods, washing away the latrines are expected to aggravate the risk factors.

The Ministry of Health appeals to the general public to;

1. **BOIL** all drinking water or add Chlorine “water guard or aquatab”
2. Open the water drainage channels around your homes and drain stagnant water
3. Wash your hands with soap and clean water after using the toilet and before eating food
4. Cook food thoroughly and eat it while still hot. Always wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly with clean water before eating them, and where possible peel before eating
5. Avoid eating cold food or drinking fluids packed in used plastic bottles or ‘buveera’
6. Collect water for household use from National Water and Sewage Cooperation (NWSC) taps and avoid water from wells or springs because they may be contaminated by disease causing organisms
7. Seek early treatment from the nearest Health Facility upon onset of symptoms

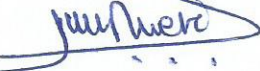
About Cholera

Cholera is an infectious disease that causes severe watery diarrhea, which can lead to dehydration and even death if untreated. It is caused by eating food or drinking water contaminated with a bacterium called *Vibrio cholerae*.

Signs and Symptoms

Symptoms of cholera can begin as soon as a few hours or as long as five days after infection. About one in 20 people infected present with; severe watery diarrhea accompanied by vomiting, which can quickly lead to dehydration. Although many infected people may have minimal or no symptoms, they can still contribute to spread of the infection.

The public is further urged to be vigilant and report any suspected Cholera cases and other strange deaths to the nearest health facility, or call our toll-free line, **0800-100-066**



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