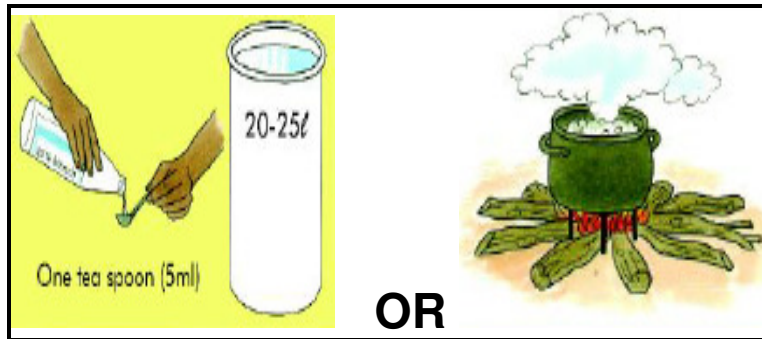
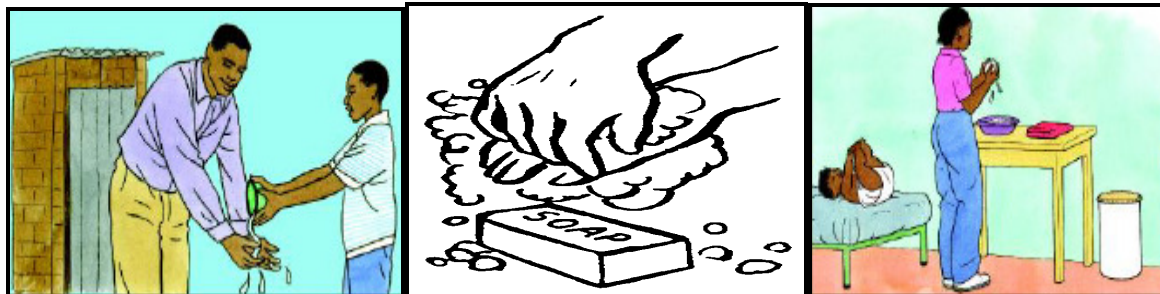


Protect yourself from cholera

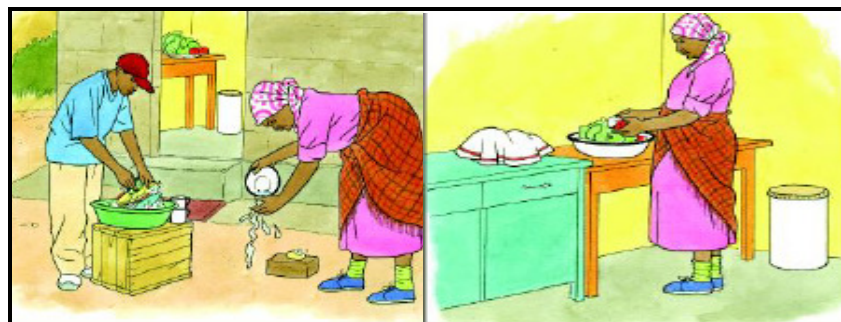
Use clean/purified water



Wash your hands



Prepare safe food



Together we can STOP cholera

What is cholera?

- An infection of the intestine caused by water-borne bacteria *Vibrio cholerae* resulting in illness characterised by acute watery diarrhoea (runny tummy). Cholera can cause rapid dehydration (loss of fluids) and death if not treated quickly and successfully.

Who is at risk?

- People using unclean water from environmental sources such as rivers, streams, bore-holes, dams, wells and those who do not have access to adequate and proper sanitation.

How is cholera spread?

- By drinking water or eating food that is infected with cholera bacteria. This happens when an infected person handles food without washing their hands, or relieves themselves into a water source. Communities using unclean water for drinking or washing of eating utensils are at risk.
- Cholera is NOT spread from person to person.
- Water that is properly purified will not be a risk.

What are the signs and symptoms of cholera?

- Most people who become infected with cholera have no symptoms but will have the bacteria in their faeces.

- Symptoms may occur from a few hours to 5 days after being infected (usually 2-3 days).
- Sudden occurrence of severe, painless watery diarrhoea – in some cases ‘rice-water’ appearance.
- Vomiting may occur early in the illness.
- Dehydration may develop within hours of being ill and may progress very rapidly.
- In severe cases: muscle cramps, cold sweaty skin, rapid breathing.
- If not treated, serious complications may occur, e.g. kidney failure.

How to protect yourself from cholera disease?

- Use clean/purified water for drinking and washing of food and utensils.
- Boil or purify water that is collected from rivers, bore-holes, streams, dams, wells and tanks before drinking or washing food and utensils.

How to purify water:

- Mix 1 teaspoon or capful of household bleach with 20-25 litres of water and let it stand for at least 2 hours (preferably overnight)
- OR
- Allow water to boil (bubble) for at least 1 full minute
- Always store purified water in a clean, covered container.
 - Wash hands with soap and clean/purified water before and after handling food, and after using the toilet or changing a baby’s nappy.
 - Wash fruit and vegetables with clean/purified water before eating.
 - Cook food well.

- Store food under hygienic conditions – keep it covered in a clean, cool place.
- Do not relieve yourself in or near rivers and other water sources.
- Faeces should be disposed of in a way that does not pollute water sources.

What should you do if you or a family member has diarrhoea?

- Prepare a mixture of oral rehydration fluid for the person to drink on their way to the clinic/hospital
- Go to the nearest clinic/hospital immediately.

How to prepare oral rehydration fluid

- Boil 1 litre of water, add 8 teaspoons of sugar and half a teaspoon of salt and mix well.

