



# Detecting & monitoring cholera outbreaks

## Pivotal role of health authorities



**Key role of (local) health authorities to ensure that surveillance generates reliable and timely information to respond to cholera**

### • Are cholera cases reported and tested as they should?

**Ensure that cholera cases are detected, reported, and tested the way they should**

Different **case definitions**, **reporting** timelines, **testing** strategies apply depending on whether there is a probable or confirmed cholera outbreak

Ensure that **all surveillance stakeholders** (e.g., health facility workers, community health workers, laboratories):

- **Know** what, how, and when to report, and who to test and how
- **Have the tools**, supplies, skills they need
- **Implement** cholera surveillance and testing according to applicable strategies (i.e., monitor surveillance performance indicators)

### • What is the cholera situation?

**Analyze epidemiological data and test results**

**Compile, clean, analyze** the data reported by health facility-based surveillance, community-based surveillance, laboratories as well as signals detected by event-based surveillance:

- **Daily to detect** rapidly a (suspected, probable or confirmed) cholera outbreak
- **Weekly to monitor** and interpret the dynamics of cholera outbreaks (time, place, person; morbidity & mortality)

### • Is more information needed to understand the situation?

**Collect additional information to better assess the situation**

Collect additional information as needed to better assess and understand the cholera situation

- **Verification:** Contact the source(s) to validate the information
- **Case investigation:** Interview the cases to collect additional information on the origin of infection, risk factors, potential source(s) of exposure, epidemiological links between case(s)
- **Field investigation:** Perform an onsite assessment and combine it with immediate response measures

### • To whom and how to disseminate information?

**Disseminate information**

- **Prepare** updates on the cholera situation
- **Disseminate** them across multiple sectors
- Ensure they are used to continuously **guide the response**



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# Important points

## • What should be reported?

### Where there is no probable or confirmed cholera outbreak

A suspected cholera case is a person **≥ 2-year-old**:  
 - with **AWD** and **severe dehydration** or  
 - who **died** from AWD

All suspected cases are **reported within 24 hours**

### Where there is a probable or confirmed cholera outbreak

A suspected cholera case is **any person** with **AWD** or who **died** from AWD

All suspected cases are **reported at least weekly**

## • Who should be tested?

### Where there is no probable or confirmed cholera outbreak

All suspected cases are tested

- Specimen collection should not delay rehydration
- RDTs can be used to **rule out cholera** but cannot be used to confirm individual cholera cases
- If RDTs are available they are used for **triaging RDT+** samples for laboratory confirmation
- Laboratory **confirmation** is by **PCR and/or culture**

### Where there is a probable or confirmed cholera outbreak

A subset of suspected cases are tested

## • How to characterize the cholera situation?

### Definition

### Response

#### Suspected cholera outbreak

**≥ 2 suspected** cholera cases reported in a surveillance unit within 7 days  
**or 1 suspected cholera case RDT+**

Immediate public health **measures for acute diarrhoeal diseases** without waiting for laboratory confirmation

#### Probable cholera outbreak

Number of suspected cholera cases tested RDT+ in a surveillance unit in the past 14 days achieves or surpasses a threshold

# RDT+	# suspected cases tested
≥ 3 RDT+	3-7
≥ 4 RDT+	8-10
≥ 5 RDT+	11-14
≥ 6 RDT+	15-17
≥ 7 RDT+	18-21

Rapid, comprehensive, and multisectoral **cholera outbreak response** without waiting for laboratory confirmation

#### Confirmed cholera outbreak

At least **one locally acquired confirmed** cholera case

Rapid, comprehensive, and multisectoral **cholera outbreak response**

#### End of a cholera outbreak (probable or confirmed)

For a minimum of **4 consecutive weeks**, all suspected cholera cases have a **negative test result** by RDT, culture, or PCR.



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