

# 10 Polio



## Transmission

- Touching the mouth with hands or objects (for example, toys) that are contaminated by the stools of a person infected with polio
- Drinking water or food contaminated by the stools of a person infected with polio

## Symptoms

- Starts with fever, tiredness, headache, vomiting, stiffness of the neck or back, or pain or stiffness in the arms or legs.
- Symptoms of “acute flaccid paralysis” or AFP are: sudden loss of reflexes (movement), severe muscle aches or weakness, and loose and floppy arms and legs.
- About one in 200 people with polio is permanently paralysed (unable to move).
- Among those paralysed, up to a tenth (10 per cent) die because the virus affects the muscles that help them breathe.

## Prevention

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Routine vaccination</li> <li>• Handwashing with soap (especially after using the toilet or cleaning a child)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of appropriate sanitation facilities (sound, clean latrines with proper faecal sludge management)</li> <li>• Social mobilization and behaviour change communication</li> </ul> |
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## Vulnerable people

- Children who are not vaccinated are most at risk
- Children living in areas with poor hygiene, sanitation and water infrastructure and services

## If an epidemic occurs

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote mass vaccination campaigns</li> <li>• Initiate community-based surveillance</li> <li>• Rapidly detect and refer suspected cases to health facilities</li> <li>• Increase social mobilization and behaviour change communication</li> <li>• Promote handwashing with soap (especially after using the toilet, defecating, or cleaning a child)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote use of appropriate sanitation facilities (sound, clean latrines that are well maintained and have proper faecal sludge management)</li> <li>• Promote safe, clean drinking water (including a clean, covered water container in the household)</li> </ul> |
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## Volunteer actions

See the following action tools for more information on how to take action against polio:

**1 2 3 4 5 19 24 25 29 30 31 32 33 34 43**

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## Community-based assessment

Make a map of the community and mark the information you gather on the map. Record other details.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When did the person first experience acute flaccid paralysis (AFP)?</li> <li>• How many people have experienced acute flaccid paralysis?</li> <li>• How many people have fallen sick with other polio symptoms? Where?</li> <li>• Was that person fully vaccinated against polio?</li> <li>• How many people live in the affected community?</li> <li>• How many children under 15 years old live in the affected community?</li> <li>• Are children in the affected community vaccinated for polio (orally or by injectable vaccine)? How many are not?</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do strong cultural beliefs or perceptions about vaccination prevent children from being vaccinated?</li> <li>• Who and where are the vulnerable people?</li> <li>• Are there any health services? Where?</li> <li>• Have the health services been alerted to a potential polio case?</li> <li>• Is a vaccination campaign planned?</li> <li>• Is a social mobilization or health promotion programme in place?</li> <li>• Which sources of information do people use most?</li> <li>• Are rumours or is misinformation about the disease spreading in the community?</li> </ul> |
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*A child with AFP*

