

FACT SHEET: Waterborne Diseases

Water carries germs that cause diseases including cholera, dysentery and gastroenteritis. The major danger from these infections is fluid loss due to diarrhoea and vomiting, which can be fatal if medical treatment is unavailable.

Prevention

Waterborne diseases are prevented by...

- keeping human and animal waste away from water
- purifying water used for drinking and food preparation
- thoroughly washing hands with soap before eating or preparing meals

Avoiding Contamination

Human and animal waste is a common source of contamination of water. This means that all farm animals should be kept away from water storage areas. Human waste must also be kept away from water storage areas.

Purification Methods

1. Boiling

Boiling is the most certain way of killing germs. Boil the water rapidly for one minute to kill all germs.

2. Chemical Purification

Chlorine tablets added to water kill germs. Be advised that many of the tablets have a 'use by' date and become ineffective after that time.

Hand Washing

Hands should be washed after using the toilet and before preparing or eating food. Wash your hands thoroughly for 1-2 minutes with soap and remember to dry your hands.