

## BHEKISISA TRACKING EMBED CODE



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### Headline: [WATCH] How does cholera spread?

Blurb: Cholera is caused by bacteria that normally comes from the faeces of an infected person. Here's how you can protect yourself.

- South Africa has its first cholera outbreak since 2009. There have been 22 confirmed cases and one death since February, says Foster Mohale, the national health department's spokesperson.
- The cholera bug recently travelled to South Africa via people [who got infected in Malawi](#) and is now spreading further.
- The disease is caused by a bacterium called *Vibrio cholerae*, [which normally hitches a ride from one person to another through an infected person's faeces](#). The bug spreads when contaminated sewage isn't disposed of properly, and then comes into contact with water or food that others consume.
- Not everyone will fall seriously ill with cholera. [One in 10 people will have severe symptoms](#) which can include watery diarrhoea, thirst and vomiting.

### Byline: Jesse Copelyn & Dylan Bush

In 2023, South Africa had its first cholera outbreak in 14 years.

Experts at the National Institute for Communicable Diseases worry that a much bigger outbreak could be coming to townships where people don't have access to proper plumbing.

Most people with cholera don't get very sick. But for one in 10 people, the disease is serious, and can cause watery diarrhoea, thirst and vomiting.

The illness can sometimes lead to death.

How does cholera spread?

People [get cholera](#) when they consume food or water that has been contaminated with a bacterium called *Vibrio cholerae*.

The bug normally hitches a ride in faeces.

In 2023, the cholera bug travelled to South Africa via people who got infected in Malawi and then spread further.

People infected with cholera shed the bacteria when they defecate, and this faeces can come into contact with food or water that others consume.

This can happen in a few ways.

1. If contaminated sewage lands up in [rivers](#) that people drink from or bathe in, they can get sick.
2. Once in the river, the bacteria can also [attach itself to fish](#) and other aquatic animals and infect the [people who eat them](#).
3. If someone with cholera hasn't washed their hands after relieving themselves, they could also [pass the bacteria on](#) when preparing food for others.
4. Vegetables can even get contaminated if sewage containing the bacteria runs through soil where they grow.

How can you protect yourself?

1. Wash your hands regularly with soap.
2. Avoid drinking or cooking with water from rivers or dams, unless it's been boiled first.

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