WE CAN PREVENT THE SPREAD OF POLIO!
WE NEED YOUR HELP!

For more information, contact the
Expanded Programme of Immunisation
(EPI) - National Department of Health Office at:

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Mpumalanga Tel: 013 235 2108 Fax: 013 235 1044
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POLIO OUTBREAK IN NAMIBIA
SOUTH AFRICA PUT ON HIGH ALERT
OF POSSIBLE POLIO CASES

We Can Protect our People from Polio
We Can Prevent the Spread of Polio
We Need your Help

Information for the: Public and Travellers to Namibia
Background

There is an outbreak of polio in Namibia, where there are confirmed wild poliovirus cases. The polio outbreak in Namibia has affected all ages, with many cases in adults. Namibia like South Africa has been free of polio for more than 10 years.

This means that there could be polio cases here in South Africa. This is important for all South Africans as it means that everyone is at risk.

Signs and Symptoms of Polio

The early signs of polio are non-specific and include: fever, headache, muscle pains, nausea and vomiting. This may progress to weakness, loss of function or paralysis of any limb or limbs. Very few cases may have neurological involvement, which affects the muscles of the chest resulting in breathing difficulties, which usually require ventilation.

Take to the Nearest Facility any Person Who:

- Presents with sudden onset of weakness or paralysis of any limb or limbs.
- Presents with generalised weakness and difficulty in breathing.
- Presents with unexplained weakness accompanied by shortness of breath while speaking.
- You think has possible polio or signs that are similar to polio.

Facts about Polio:

- Polio is spread from person to person via the faecal-oral route (through hands and foodstuffs contaminated with faecal material).
- Polio is not spread by sneezing and coughing.
- There is no need for health workers or anyone to wear masks when attending to confirmed or suspected cases.
- Immunisation with the right doses given at the right intervals protects against polio.
- Anyone who is not fully immunised; children and adults can get polio.

You can Prevent Polio:

- Make sure that children are fully immunised against polio.
- Always wash your hands with soap and water before handling food.
- Always wash your hands with soap and water after visiting the toilet.
- Wash all fruits and vegetables with a safe water supply before use.

Travellers to Namibia:

All those travelling to Namibia, irrespective of age are advised to get a booster dose of polio vaccine at least 10 - 14 days before departure.

Travellers to Namibia should also employ high hygiene standards right through their stay in Namibia. This includes strict hand hygiene (as above) and use of safe water sources.