I. **SEVEN GOLDEN RULES FOR SAFE FOOD PREPARATION**

Prepared by KZN Health Promotion Programme & WHO/AFRO, October 2000

1. **Cook raw food thoroughly**
   
   Many raw foods, such as fish and vegetables, etc., can easily be contaminated with cholera bacteria. Thorough cooking will kill the bacteria. Do not eat uncooked foods, unless they can be peeled or shelled.

2. **Eat cooked foods immediately**
   
   When cooked foods get cold, bacteria begin to grow. To be on the safe side, eat cooked foods as soon as they are cooked or thoroughly reheat previously cooked food before eating.

3. **Avoid contact between raw foods and cooked foods**
   
   Safely cooked food can become contaminated through even the slightest contact with raw food. Cross-contamination can take place when raw fish comes into direct contact with cooked foods. Potential risks of illness can also be reintroduced by preparing raw fish and then using the same unwashed cutting surface and knife to slice cooked food.

4. **Choose food processed for safety**
   
   In an area affected by cholera, such foods as fruits and vegetables, may not be safe unless they have been processed through canning, drying, etc.

5. **Wash hands repeatedly**
   
   Wash hands thoroughly before you start preparing food and after every interruption e.g. changing or cleaning up the baby or using the toilet or latrine. After preparing raw foods, such as fish or vegetables, wash your hands again before you start handling other foods.
6. **Keep all kitchen surfaces clean**

Any surface used for food preparation must be kept absolutely clean. Think of every food scrap, crumb or spot as a potential source of bacteria. Cloths used for washing or drying food preparation surfaces, dishes, and utensils should be changed every day and boiled before use. Separate cloths for cleaning the floor also require daily washing.

7. **Use safe water**

Safe water is just as important for food preparation as for drinking. Bring water to a rolling boil before using it to prepare infant’s meals. **Bleach or Jik may be used instead of boiling to make water safe.** Add 1 teaspoon Bleach or Jik to 25 litres of water. Leave standing for minimum of 2 hours, but preferably overnight, before consumption.

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**II. Are you protected from cholera?**
(Do you prepare food safely?)

**Cooking kills cholera germs**

- Thoroughly cook all meats, fish and vegetables.
- Eat cooked food while hot.

**Washing protects from cholera**

- Wash your hands before preparing or serving food.
- Wash your dishes and utensils with soap and water.
- Wash cutting surfaces well with soap and water.

**Peeling protects from cholera**

- Eat only fruits that have been freshly peeled such as oranges or bananas.

Keep it clean - Cook it, peel it, or leave it!
III. Three simple rules for CHOLERA prevention

- Cook **Y** food
- Boil **U** water
- Wash hands

IV. Are you protected from cholera?

Is your water boiled or treated?

Water can be made safe in several ways:

- Boiling kills cholera germs
- Chlorine or bleach kills cholera germs.

Even if it looks clean, water can contain cholera germs.

Drink safe water!

V. Are you protected from cholera?

Is your water stored safely?

- Clean water can become contaminated if it is not stored safely.
- Store water in a clean container with a cover.
- Use stored water within 24 hours.
- Pour water from container or use a cup with a handle.

Keep it clean - store water safely
VI. Are you protected from cholera?

Do you wash your hands?

Most dirt that causes cholera can be carried on hands without you knowing it.

Always wash your hands

- After you use the toilet or latrine, or clean up your children.
- Before you prepare food.
- Before you eat.
- Before you feed your children.

What is the best way to wash your hands?

- Always use soap.
- Always use clean water.
- Always wash all parts of your hands - front, back, between the fingers, under the nails.

Keep it clean - wash your hands!

VII. Are you protected from cholera?

Do you use a toilet or latrine?

Even a person who is healthy may have cholera germs in the faeces.

Always use a toilet or latrine.

- Keep the toilet or latrine clean.
- Dispose of babies’ faeces in the toilet or latrine (or bury them).
- Wash your hands with soap and clean water after using the toilet or latrine.

Keep it clean - use a toilet or latrine!
VIII. Preventing the spread of cholera

To prevent cholera

- Drink only water from a safe source or water that has been treated.
- Cook food or reheat it thoroughly, and eat it while it is still hot.
- Avoid uncooked food unless it can be peeled or shelled.
- Wash your hands after any contact with excreta and before preparing or eating food.
- Dispose of human excreta promptly and safely.

Remember

- With proper treatment, cholera is not fatal.
- Take suspected patient immediately to a health worker for treatment.
- Give increased quantities of fluids (oral rehydration salts solution), as soon as diarrhoea starts.