

Cholera in Cambodia

Why the Cambodian people should be informed about Cholera and not only about an "aggressive Diarrhea"

We learn today in the daily newspapers that WHO is still thinking that the aggressive diarrhea spreading out in Cambodia since November 2009 is a common and seasonal one.

The Kantha Bopha's experience (the Ministry of Health is informed about since November 2009) is telling you an other story: Day by day we see in our outpatient station (with daily 3000 outpatients) dozens of children with seasonal and common diarrhea. Since 18 years time. And today there are not more common and seasonal diarrheas than ever. The children with suspected Cholera are different: they arrive in a most severe conditions, their face has a specific expression, a toxic one, a desperate one.

In January 2010 120 suspected cholera cases were hospitalized in the Kantha Bopha Hospitals. In 54 cases the Cholera was confirmed by our laboratory.

The seasonable and common diarrheas are caused by a virus, the Cholera by the germ "Vibrio Cholerae". So its treatments are different. The germ Vibrio has to be killed by an antibiotic. Immediately. That is why all people living in the neighborhood of a known Cholera patient have to be informed immediately. The Incubation time of Cholera is five hours up to six days. So a neighbor suffering from vomiting and diarrhea the following hours or days has to be treated immediately by Ceftriaxon (Ampicillin and Bactrim are not working). That is why all Cambodian people must be informed!

Today Cambodian people are much more traveling around the country than 12 years ago. 1998 there was a Cholera Epidemic too. The Kantha Bopha Hospitals (at this time Kantha Bopha I and II) have hospitalized 500 suspected cases. 250 cases were confirmed. But the epidemic was contained and focused on two spots only.

Today, 9.2.2010, there are 20 cases of Cholera in the Kantha Bopha Hospitals. Three confirmed and severe cases, but fortunately now being saved, are not living in a infected and typical Cholera zone: One case in Tuork Kork, one case in Pochentong, one in Takmao (Tuol Kra Saing).

The flies transporting the Vibrio Cholera from poor sanitations to the food are traveling too: by taxis, by cars, by boats, by airplanes. They too have to be killed in the most infected zones.