

Key messages for health education: Hepatitis E

Cook your food – Boil your water – Wash your hands

1. Personal hygiene

- Wash your hands with soap, ashes, or lime:
 - before cooking
 - before eating and before feeding your children
 - after using the latrine or cleaning your children after they have used the latrine.
- Wash all parts of your hands – front, back, between the fingers, under nails.
- Use the latrine to defecate.
- Keep the latrine clean.

2. Food

- Cook raw food thoroughly.
- Eat cooked foods immediately.
- Store cooked food carefully in refrigerator.
- Reheat cooked food thoroughly.
- Avoid contact between raw food and cooked food.
- Eat fruit and vegetables you have peeled yourself.
- Keep all kitchen surfaces clean.
- Wash your cutting board especially well with soap and water.
- Wash your utensils and dishes with soap and water.

Cook it – peel it – or leave it

3. Safe drinking-water

- Even if it looks clear, water can contain cholera germs.
- Boil or add drops of chlorine to the water before drinking.
- Keep drinking-water in a clean, covered pot or bucket or other container with a small opening and a cover. It should be used within 24 hours of collection.
- Pour the water from the container – do not dip a cup into the container.
- If dipping into the water container cannot be avoided, use a cup or other utensil with a handle.

4. Wells

- Do not defecate or urinate in or near a source of drinking-water.
- Do not wash yourself, your clothes, or your pots and utensils in the source of drinking-water (stream, river, or water hole).
- Open wells must be covered when not in use to avoid contamination.
- The buckets used to collect water should be hung up when not in use – they must not be left on a dirty surface.
- The area surrounding a well or a hand pump must be kept as clean as possible.
- Get rid of refuse and stagnant water around a water source.

5. Pregnant women

- Pregnant women are at greatest risk of death from HEV and should be sent to a hospital immediately if Hepatitis E is suspected : yellow eyes, lack of appetite, abdominal pain, nausea and vomiting and fever.

6. Taking care of patients

- Wash your hands after taking care of patients, touching them, their stools, vomit, or clothes.
- Avoid contaminating a water source by washing a patient's clothes in it.
- Stools and vomit from a patient can be mixed with disinfectant (e.g. cresol).
- Disinfect the patient's clothing and bedding with a solution of chlorine (0.05%) or by stirring them in boiling water or by drying them thoroughly in the sun before and after normal washing.