



Polio

Polio is a vaccine-preventable disease, caused by the polio virus that has now been eradicated from most countries in the world, due to the worldwide immunisation programme. However, in 2004 six countries still had Endemic Poliovirus, these countries being Nigeria, Pakistan, India, Niger, Afghanistan and Egypt.

How is Polio spread?

Polio is transmitted via the oral-faecal route – this is by exposure to faecally contaminated food or water or by person to person contact.

How can you avoid Polio?

- Good personal hygiene, ie hand-washing after using the toilet and before eating
- Only swim in chlorinated water or that unlikely to be contaminated with sewage
- Eat food that has been thoroughly cooked and is served piping hot

Remember: “Boil it, cook it, peel it or forget it!”

Vaccine recommendations:

Polio vaccine is now combined with tetanus and diphtheria as one injection. Most people have had previous doses of polio as 'baby injections' so a booster dose is usually all that is required when travelling to countries that still have the disease.