

A PRIMARY HEALTH ADVISORY

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About the Pocketbook

Hi, this pocketbook is for you and your family members to protect yourself against diseases that break out during the monsoon season. It contains tips on how to maintain a healthy lifestyle and how to stay away from these diseases. I hope that you find this book useful. Please share feedback with your Wellness Facilitator/Community Health Worker.



Do you want to know about my organisation? Swasti is an international health resource centre headquartered at Bengaluru. We work to improve health outcomes of low income and vulnerable communities.

Do you want more details about our work? You can go to our website: www.swasti.org



Use this book during the monsoon season, or when there is other flooding and heavy rainfall in your neighborhood. If you feel any weakness or symptoms like headache, cold and cough, you should refer to this book on how to feel better and protect yourself against illness. Feel free to contact your wellness facilitator or the helpline given at the end of the book in case of any queries.





Instructions to use the Pocketbook

Familiarize yourself with the book. As you can see in the Table of Contents, this book

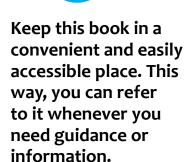
has four main categories:

- a. General Health Care
- b. Managing diseases during monsoons
- c. When to seek professional healthcare
- d. Managing and responding to flooding

This will help you quickly find the information you need when you require it.

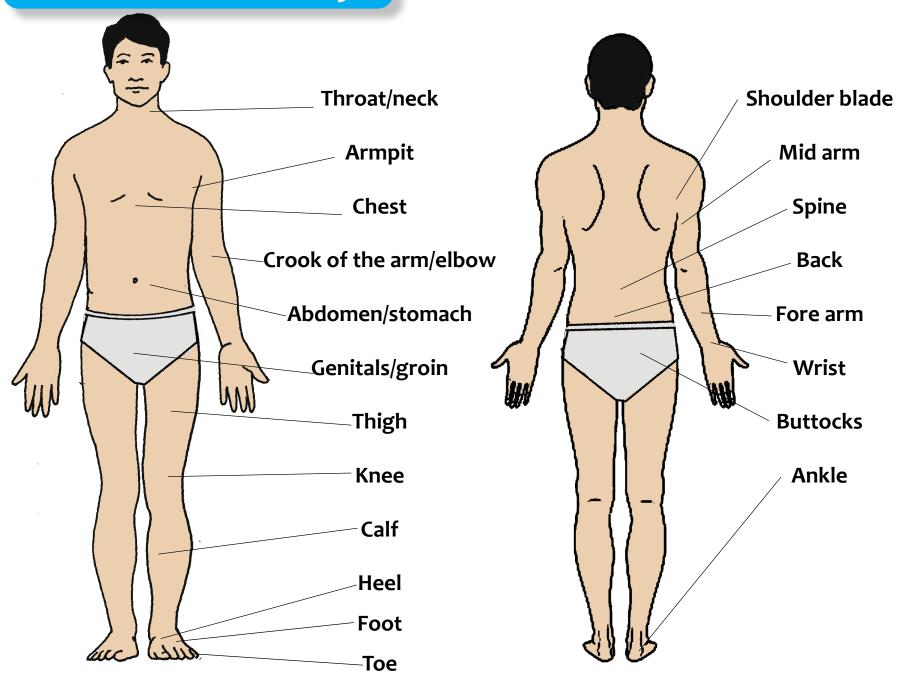


Share the information you've learned with friends, family, and your loved ones. Engaging in discussions about your health can lead to better decisionmaking and support.



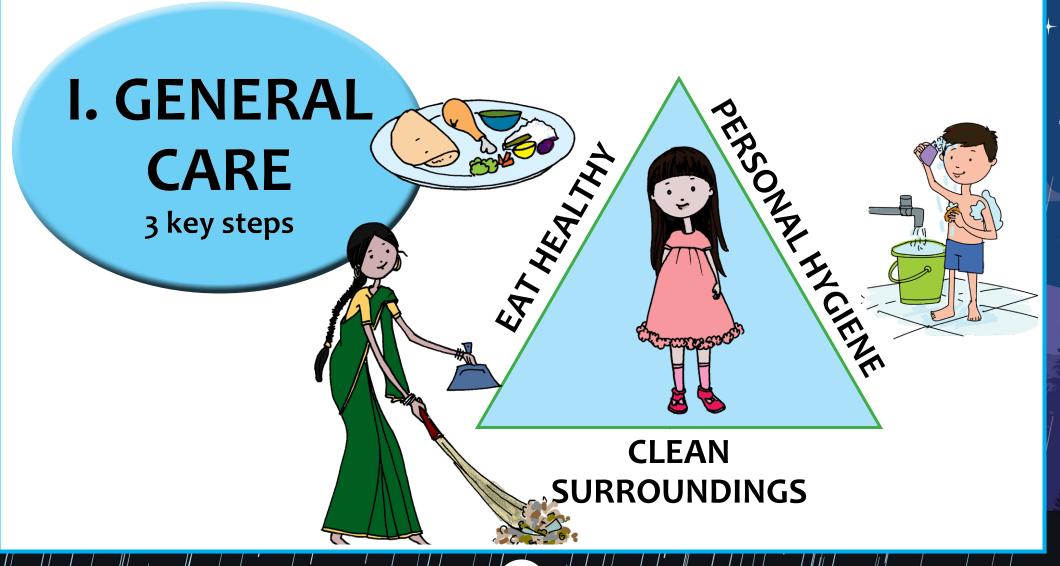


Parts of the Body



ENSURING GOOD HEALTH AND WELL BEING DURING THE MONSOONS

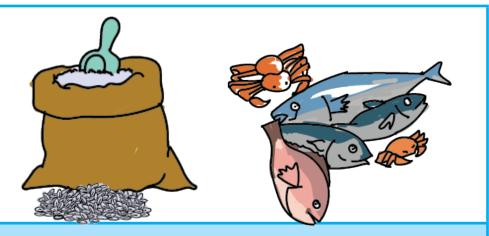
A primary health advisory



Drinking and hydrating for health



Use boiled or filtered water and store your food and water in clean and sealed containers away from damp areas.



Avoid eating or drinking anything that has been exposed to rainwater or has a foul smell / taste.



Do this especially during the daytime to maintain a healthy gut and prevent colds.

Opt for curd and lassi (fermented probiotics) instead of milk and other dairy products.



The healthpromoting properties of turmeric protect you from getting sick.

Drink a glass of warm turmeric milk before sleeping.

Eating a healthy diet





Try to steam or re-cook food before consumption, especially salad and boiled rice.

It will kill any harmful bacteria or virus that may be present in the food.

Make steamy hot soup if you are hungry.

Packed with nutrients, soups are easy to digest and will keep your tummy happy. It will also help with colds and soothe your throat.





Include spices- add a clove of garlic to curries and other preparations. Ginger, pepper, fenugreek, cinnamon, cardamom, and nutmeg are other spices.

They fight infections and germs. These are great to add to your tea also.

Try to consume fruits and vegetables with Vitamin C such as lemon, tomato, potato, amla, guava, orange, papaya etc. Seasonal fruits like jamun are a good option.

Vitamin C boosts your immune system which helps your body fight against germs and diseases.



Eating a healthy diet contd

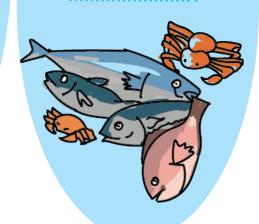


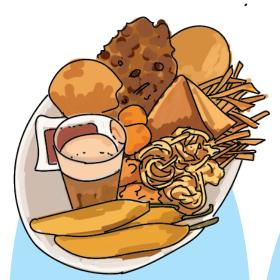
Try to consume seasonal vegetables like gourds (bitter gourd, bottle gourd, ash gourd, ridge gourd, snake gourd), as well as cucumbers, tomatoes, beans, ladies' finger and radish. Wash them thoroughly before using them and try to avoid eating cut fruits and salads from outside.

These vegetables are rich in water and fiber which will keep you hydrated and prevent constipation.

Limit seafood.

Contaminated water is an especial risk during monsoons, and seafood may carry this contamination.





Try to avoid oily, spicy, or fried food.

These foods may cause indigestion, acidity, or inflammation.

If you are suffering from arthritis, drink warm water with herbs and spices on an empty stomach in the morning.

High humidity can increase swelling in the joints and worsen arthritis pain. Herbs and spices will control this and provide extra nourishment.



Skin and body care



Apply neem oil or coconut oil on skin to keep it hydrated.

Taking a hot foot water bath can be beneficial in relieving congestion and reducing headaches.





Wash your hands frequently with soap and water to prevent spread of germs and infections.

Skin and body care contd



Treat any cuts,
wounds, or fungal
infections with
antiseptic cream or
lotion to prevent
infection. Apply direct
pressure to any bleeding
wound to control the
bleeding. Pour saline
solution (preferred) or
clean running water on
the wound, and clean
with soap.

Bathe at least once a day with mild soap and water. This will keep your skin clean and remove dirt, sweat and germs. Keep your pets and livestock clean and healthy. Wash them with soap and water if they have been exposed to flood water or mud. Vaccinate them against rabies or leptospirosis if possible.

Avoid walking or swimming in flooded areas, as they may contain sewage, chemicals, or animal waste. If you have to cross a flooded area, wear protective boots or shoes and wash your feet thoroughly afterwards.





Homecare



Wipe your floor with neem or eucalyptus oil to disinfect it.





Use waterproof sealants or putty to fill in cracks and leakages and prevent water seepage.



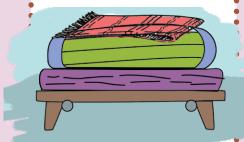
Waterproof coating or paint on the exterior walls and roof can protect the property from rainwater.



Keep your windows and doors open during the day to allow sunlight and fresh air to enter and reduce moisture and odor from your home.

Homecare contd

Try to store rugs, mats and bedding in dry places.





If you notice any stains or fungus on your fabrics, wash them with detergent or vinegar and dry them well before using them again. You can also mix a cup of bleach with 4-5 liters of water. Make sure to open windows and doors first before using the bleach mix.

Place your valuable items and electronics on a raised platform in the house to avoid it from getting drenched in the water.



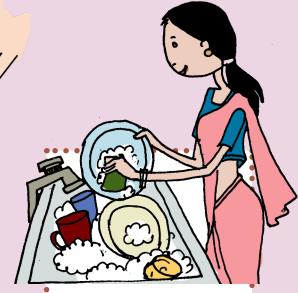


If needed, seek help from an electrician to check your wiring and sockets before the rainy season.

Homecare contd



Wrap up any exposed wires or cables with tape or plastic to prevent short circuits or shocks.



Clean and disinfect any utensils, containers, or surfaces that may have come in contact with flood water. Use boiled or chlorinated water to wash them and dry them well before using them again.



Cover any open containers or tanks that may collect rainwater and become breeding grounds for mosquitoes. Drain any stagnant water around your house or garden regularly.

PREVENTING AND MANAGING DISEASES DURING MONSOONS

During flooding and heavy rainfall, there are some major diseases carried by bacteria, viruses, fleas or mosquitoes that we all need to watch out for and try to prevent. We have covered these major diseases in this section along with tips on how to prevent them and treat mild cases.







Cold and Flu

What is the most common illness you and your family members, especially children face?

'Cold and Flu'

Eating an icecream or playing in the rain do not cause cold and flu. It is passed from sick people to healthy people through saliva or mucus. Open sneezes and coughs are often the reasons for it.

Cold with high fever, nausea and chills indicates flu.

Not medicines nor antibiotics, but plenty of water, citrus fruits and rest are the answers to cold and flu. Gargling warm water also helps.

Consult a doctor if you feel very sick or if fever lasts for more than 3-5 days.



All of you know the symptoms of cold and flu

Runny nose and cough
 Sore throat
 Sneezing
 Headache
 Mild joint pain

Shoo away cold and flu by following these simple measures:

- 1. Get enough sleep and eat nutritious food
- 2. Wash hands regularly with soap and clean water
- 3. When you are sick, eat and sleep away from others. Do not allow the virus to spread.
- 4. Always sneeze or cough into your arm and not into your hands
- Keep your handkerchief clean and do not let it touch other people.

Flu vaccine will protect children below 6 months from cold and flu. Don't forget to vaccinate your child.

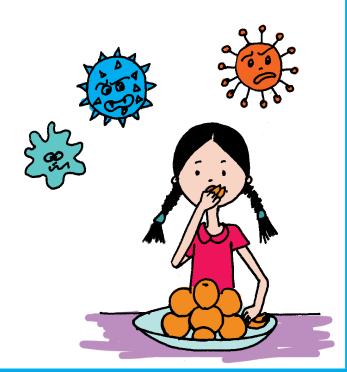


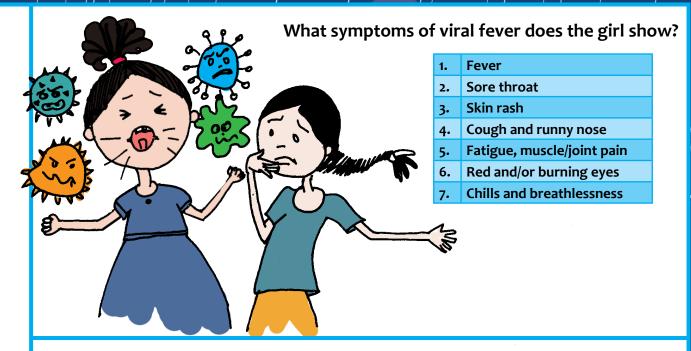
Viral Fever

After every rainy season doesn't fever visit your houses at least once and stays on for 3 days to a week?

Like cold and flu this also passes from sick people to healthy people through the wet droplets from sneezes, coughs, nose blowing and talking.

Plenty of water, rest and healthy food, warm water gargle and fruits such as oranges and limes will help you recover real quick.





Certain steps can save you from yearly attack. Like what?

- 1. Wash hands regularly with soap and clean water especially after coughing or sneezing
- 2. Cover your mouth with arms not hands when you cough or sneeze
- 3. Drink plenty of fluids
- 4. Get plenty of sleep
- 5. Eat plenty of nutritious food
- 6. Wash all utensils that a sick person uses with soap and water





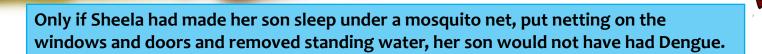
Dengue

Sheela's son is very sick. She says "It's mosquitoes I know, but is it Dengue or Malaria? I am worried!"

Can we help Sheela? I think it is Dengue. Could you tell her the symptoms?

- 1. High fever and chills for 2-7 days
- 2. Body pain
- 3. Headache with eye pain
- 4. Sore throat
- 5. Rashes in the hands and feet, spreads across the body except face
- 6. Dark spots and visible bleeding a very dangerous symptom

Don't worry. Give
him plenty of water and juices.
If he develops dark spots, bleeding,
continuous vomiting or stomach
pain, rush him to a doctor.



Malaria

Are there mosquitoes in your area?

Do you know Malaria is spread by mosquitoes?

Can someone tell me how it spreads?



I have bites me



Mosquito then bites my friend



My friend now has malaria



How did you identify the disease? Malaria has three stages



Chills Fever Sweating

You can also identify malaria by some of the common symptoms:

- Runny nose, cough and signs of respiratory infection
- 2. Diarrhea
- 3. Skin rash
- 4. Fever and chills
- Seizure or short periods of unconsciousness
- 6. Swelling of joints



Please do not try home remedies to treat this illness. Go directly to a health facility and see a doctor. Monitor the patient closely and check progress.

There definitely are quite a few ways of preventing this illness. The woman in the picture is trying to protect her family from Malaria:



- Sleep under mosquito nets
- Put screens/netting on windows and doors
- 3. Use mosquito repellent
- 4. Remove standing water where mosquito breeds and hatches
- Wear full sleeves, long pants and socks in areas with mosquitoes





How many of you know what Chikungunya is?



2 3 4 5 6

The boy is not keeping well. His mother thinks he has Chikungunya. What makes her think so? What is the boy suffering from? Can you look at the image and tell?

Muscle /Joint pain

and swelling
2 Vomiting

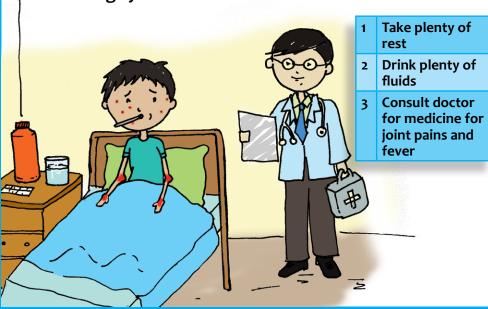
3 Headache

4 Fatigue

5 Fever

6 Rash

Once you are infected with Chikungunya what are the 3 main things you should do to recover fast?



The child in the picture is safe and healthy. Can you tell me what are some of the things you should do to prevent Chikungunya?

- 1 Get rid of all standing water near homes and schools. Mosquitoes can breed in very small pools
 - 2 Use mosquito coils or mosquito repellent
 - 3 Place screens over doors and windows
 - 4 Sleep under mosquito nets
 - 5 Wear clothes covering all parts of body when in areas with mosquitoes
 - 6 Keep people infected with Chikungunya away from mosquito bites for first 3 days of illness

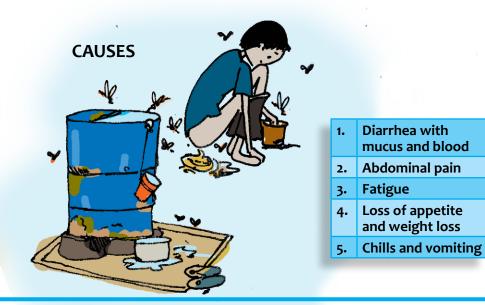


Diarrhea and Dysentery

Do your children suffer from loose watery stools or frequent bowel movements, sometimes for many days?

This illness is called diarrhea. Generally curable at home, diarrhea can sometimes be very dangerous and life threatening, especially if the diseased is malnourished, does not practice good hygiene, or has serious illnesses such as HIV/AIDS. A very serious form of diarrhea is called dysentery.

There is also a serious form of diarrhea called Dysentery. What are the symptoms?



How can you look after/treat someone with this illness?



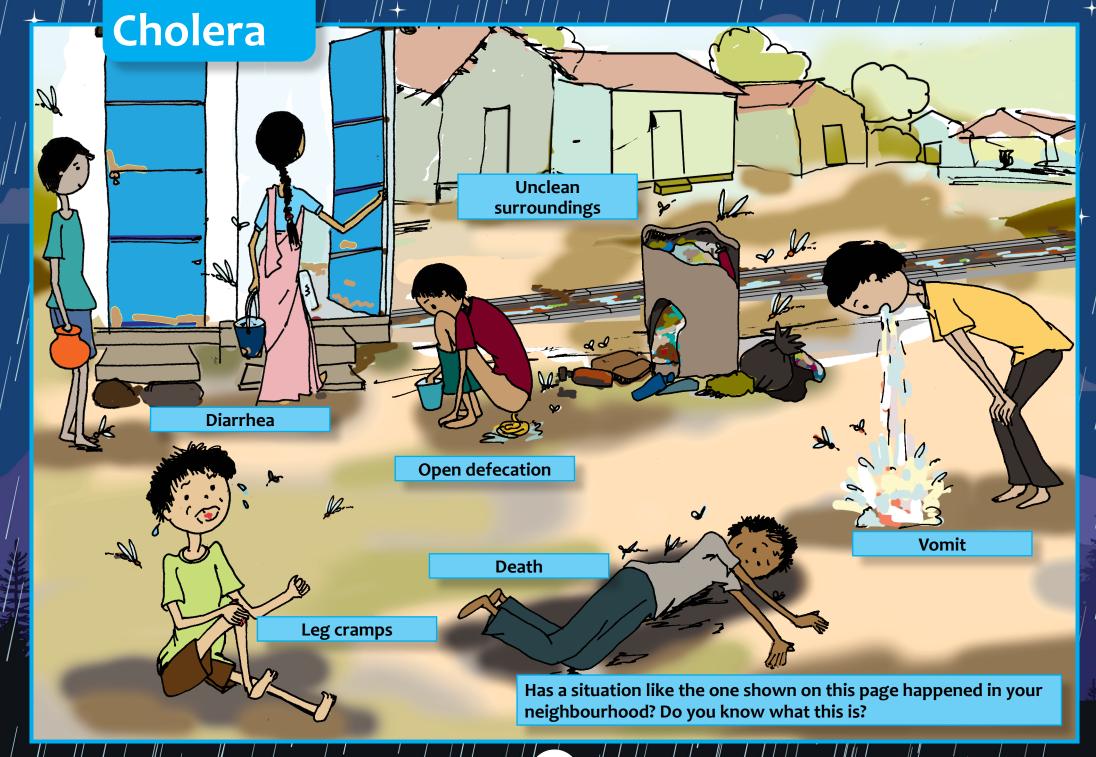
- Give the person lots of water and fluids
- Give the person lots of nutritious food
- Give the person many small meals and ensure the person is well nourished- 5-6 small meals should be good
- 4. Plenty of rest
- If the disease lasts for more than 4 days and is not getting better seek medical help. With children, do not wait for 4 days. Rush them immediately to a doctor.

Preventing diarrhea is simple and each of you can take these simple steps:



- Boil/filter water before drinking
- 2. Cook in hygienic surroundings
- 3. Have a well balanced diet
- 4. Wash hands regularly with soap and clean water





Cholera contd

This is a disease called Cholera. It is a serious bacterial infection and causes severe diarrhea. But this is a fatal disease and can kill a person in as little as one day.

How do you know if you have cholera?

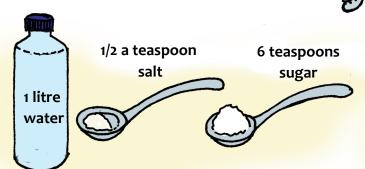
1.	Profuse watery diarrhea that looks like rice water
2.	Vomiting
3.	Leg Cramps
4.	Severe dehydration



What can you do if you have cholera?

- 1. First step is to get medical help
- 2. Plenty of water, fluids and the rehydration drink
- 3. Consult doctor and get antibiotics





It is always better to prevent such a situation and the steps are quite simple. The picture shows you a family with good practices. Can you tell me what they are?



- 1. Drink from safe water sources
- 2. Disinfect water:
 - a. Boil water
 - b.~%~ iodine tablet in boiling water
 - c. 2 drops of household bleach to one litre water
- Wash hands regularly, especially after using bathroom and before preparing food and before eating
- 4. Use clean water to wash dishes and prepare food
- 5. Eat clean hygienic food, freshly cooked and served hot



Internal Worms

Suman and Raju are playing barefeet. This can cause serious illnesses.

Worms and other tiny organisms could enter their body, eat up the nutrition and make them weak or very very sick.



Worms are dangerous- they cause malnutrition and anemia. They also affect growth and development in children.

1.	Stomach pain
2.	Vomiting
3.	Itching
4.	Diarrhea
5.	Loss of Appetite
6.	Swollen Belly
7.	Blood in feces or urine
8.	Tiredness
9.	Poor physical and mental growth

How do worms enter your body?

- Through your feet when you roam around barefoot
- 2. Through infected food and water
- 3. Through your skin

If you notice any of the above mentioned symptoms, ensure that you first go and seek medical help. Also make sure you drink plenty of water and other fluids.



Suman and Raju should follow these steps to keep all the worms away and play happily:

- 1. Wash hands regularly with clean water and soap
- 2. Wear shoes when they play outside
- 3. Avoid contact with feces. Only defecate in Latrines and not in the open
- 4. Eat hygienic food.
- 5. Drink clean filtered/boiled water
- 6. Take the pill recommended by doctors once or twice a year



Typhoid Fever

Typhoid occurs in large waves of sickness through dirty food and water. Rahul wants to educate his family and friends about Typhoid and protect them.

Rahul says "Typhoid symptoms can be split into week 1,2 and 3"



Week 1

- Headache, sore throat and dry cough
- 3. Fever fluctuating up and down reaching 104 degree fahrenheit or more
- 4. Inability to drink
- 5. Vomiting
- 6. Diarrhea or constipation

Week 2

- 1. Fever with low pulse rate
- 2. Pink spots on body

is simple:

- 3. Quivering or shaking
- 4. Not make sense while speaking
- 5. Weakness and weight loss

Preventing Typhoid

- with clean water and soap, especially after using bathroom and before preparing food
- 2. No open defecation.
 Only defecate in clean and safe latrines
- 3. Boil or filter water.
 Always drink safe water

Week 3

Same symptoms as week 1 and 2. The symptoms slowly start going away.

Once you contract typhoid what can you do?

- 1. Rush to the doctor NOW!
- 2. Take plenty of water, juices and nutritious watery food like Khichadi
- 3. Take complete rest till fever completely goes away
- 4. If stool contains blood or diseased has severe abdominal pain, take medical assistance immediately



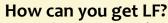




Lymphatic Filariasis

What is LF/Lymphatic Filariasis/ Hathipaon/?

Lymphatic filariasis is a disease caused by tiny worms that infect the immune system. You may have noticed a person whose legs look very swollen. It is also called Elephantiasis. In your language, you may know it as hathipaon or aane kalu roga.



LF spreads when mosquitoes that bite infected people bite others. It can cause longterm damage in the human body such as swelling of the limbs, genitals, or breasts, and damage to kidneys and the immune system. It can also cause pain, disability, and social stigma for the affected people, but remember, it is the mosquitoes that are the culprit, not the people



Unfortunately, it is not possible for a lot of people to notice the infection because there are often no external signs even when the disease is spreading.

If you notice these symptoms, reach out to a health worker or center immediately:

- 1. Swelling in the limbs, genitals, or breasts due to fluid buildup leading the area to feel puffy, heavy, and swollen
- 2. Hardening and thickening of the skin, often in the leg causing pain
- 3. Swelling in the scrotum area for men due to fluid buildup

How to prevent LF?

If you live in or travel to an area with LF, you can take the following steps:



- Sleep under a mosquito net or in an air-conditioned room at night
- Wear long sleeves and trousers and use mosquito repellent on exposed skin between dusk and dawn
- 3. Maintain vector control by eliminating mosquito breeding sites, such as stagnant water, trash, or vegetation
- 4. Practice personal hygiene by regularly washing your hands, feet, and nails and keeping your skin clean and dry
- 5. Contact your nearest hospital to learn more about the Mass Drug Administration for LF. The medicines are usually given once a year for at least 5 years







How to take care of your emotional wellbeing?

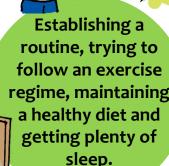
This season also causes increased mental and emotional distress among people who are trying to cope with disastrous situations, and may have lost valuables, and even loved ones. During such a time, follow these steps to ensure the mental health and wellbeing of your communities



Try to create a playful and engaging atmosphere for younger children where it will be easier for them to share their feelings about the event.



Try to stay informed but at the same time avoid too much exposure to news.







Try to verify sources of information because there might be rumors floating around



Common health myths to dispel from our minds:





Myth: Symptoms and diseases can be cured by prayers or by the blessings of some local religious leader.

Fact: Doctors are trained and qualified professionals whose knowledge and skill allows them to diagnose and treat various diseases and conditions using scientific methods and evidence-based practices. Unless medically qualified, local religious leaders are not authorized to prescribe medical treatments. Therefore, their treatments may not be effective or even safe.







Myth: Children vomit after being affected by evil spirits.

Fact: Vomiting is not a disease but a symptom. It can have many causes, ranging from mild to serious illnesses like stomach infections, food allergy, migraine, etc. Because children tend to lose a substantial amount of fluids during vomiting episodes, it can lead to dehydration. Therefore children suffering from vomiting should drink plenty of fluids to replenish water loss from the body. ORS solution can be given which contains minerals, sugar, salt. If vomiting lasts for more than 24 hours, it is advised to consult the doctor immediately.

Common health myths to dispel from our minds: contd





Myth: Infections like typhoid, cholera and others can be cured by religious/spiritual leaders

Fact: Such infections can cause high fever, abdominal pain, and diarrhea. They can be life-threatening if not treated promptly with antibiotics. Due to the requirement of antibiotics, a doctor should be consulted immediately. Antibiotics will be given based on the symptoms, medical and travel history which can only be prescribed by a trained medical professional. Please follow the guidelines for consumption of food and fluids shared above.



Myth: Skin rashes and allergies can be cured by taking a bath in mountain water.

Fact: Cold water does help in curing rashes but there is no scientific proof that mountain water can do the same. It is advised to use clean water for the same, whereas mountain water today can have bacteria, parasites or other microorganisms that can cause infections or worsen existing rashes. For rashes that cover more of the body or that affect an area that is difficult to cover with an ice pack, a cool bath or shower may provide relief.





III. WHEN TO SEEK PROFESSIONAL HEALTHCARE?

Despite all the preventive steps and measures shared so far, there may be times when you need professional health support in managing illness or disease.

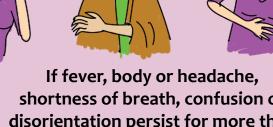


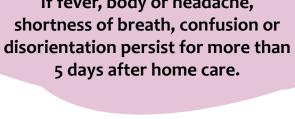
When to seek professional healthcare?

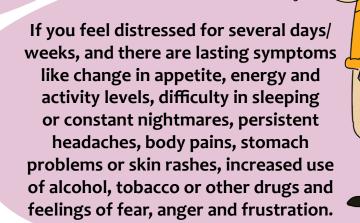


There is a large wound, a deep

'puncture' wound caused by a
sharp object or animal, or an
infected wound with redness
or swelling. Such wounds
might require a booster shot of
Tetanus.









If someone has been

electrocuted

IV. HOW TO MANAGE AND RESPOND TO FLOODING?





Managing and responding to flooding



Speak to your local authorities to have gutters, drains or pipes regularly cleaned and to manage garbage.

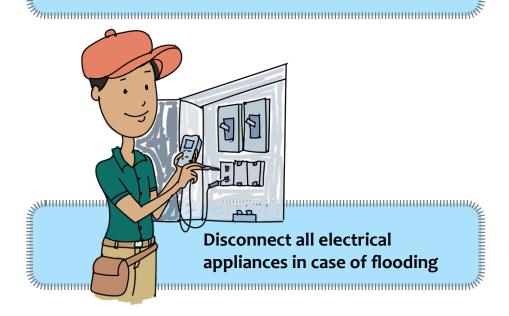


Try to dispose of any garbage or decaying material as early as possible to avoid the growth of flies.



If you live in low lying areas, keep an eye on the weather forecast, warning message or evacuation announcement.

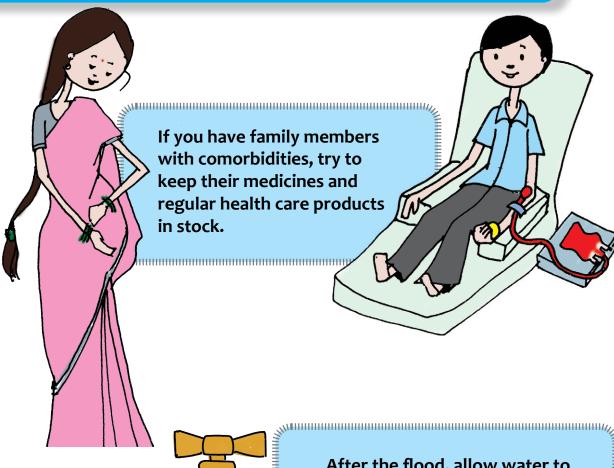
After a flood, it is advised to return home only after the local authorities have declared it safe to do so.



Managing and responding to flooding contd



If you have to walk in water, walk where the water is not moving.
Use a stick to check the firmness of the ground in front of you as well as the depth of water.



After the flood, allow water to flow for at least 5 minutes in all taps to flush out the impurities. Submerged bore-wells, sumps, and open wells can be used for collecting drinking water only after a thorough cleaning.

Make an emergency waterproof kit. Include the following:

First aid box essentials, medicines, medical reports, prescriptions
Important documents such as IDs (ration card, voter ID card, Aadhaar etc), birth/educational/marriage certificates, deeds, vehicle documents etc
List of important contact numbers, phone and chargers
Atleast 5 liters of water and 3 days supply of food with dry items such as biscuits.
Special items for babies, children and the elderly
Chlorine tablets
ORS packets: Consume ORS within 24 hours of preparing it. Dosage: Children below 2 years - 1/4 to 1/2 cup; Children above 2 years - 1/2 to 1 cup.
Torch, batteries, personal hygiene items
Face masks, bars of soap or sanitizers and towels
Cups, plates, knives and scissors
Strong ropes and plastic /waterproof material
Valuables



7 Key Steps to Healthy Living



Wash hands with soap and clean water



Drink boiled/filtered water















For Swathi Mahila Sangha members (i4We Bangalore):





80350 18045

or Contact your



ASHAs in the Aganwadi In case of an emergency:



Go to the nearest hospital immediately

or

the nearest Community
Healthcare Centre (CHC) or
Primary Healthcare Centre (PHC)





If your community or village doesn't have a CHC or PHC, reach out to the district hospital



For Arogyadeepa Swasthya Samiti members (i4We Bangalore):





80350 17790

or Contact your



Wellness Facilitator

ASHAs in the Aganwadi

In case of an emergency:



Go to the nearest hospital immediately

or

the nearest Community
Healthcare Centre (CHC) or
Primary Healthcare Centre (PHC)





If your community or village doesn't have a CHC or PHC, reach out to the district hospital



Notes

Stay Safe and Prepared during the Monsoon Season!

REMEMBER, PREPAREDNESS IS KEY





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