

Cholera in Africa spreading at 'alarming' rate

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(AP) -- An alarming number of new cholera cases have been reported in the West African nations of Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria, an international aid agency said Thursday.

While cholera is endemic to the region, far more cases than usual have been reported, said the U.K.-based office of Doctors Without Borders.

Nigeria experienced its worst cholera outbreak in 19 years earlier this month when 13,000 were sickened and nearly 800 died in two months. That outbreak then spread to neighboring Cameroon, Chad and Niger, where more than 300 people died.

UNICEF has said that Cameroon is suffering the worst [outbreak](#) of cholera in 20 years.

Cholera is a waterborne [bacterial infection](#) spread through contaminated water. It causes severe diarrhea and vomiting that can lead to dehydration and death within hours. Treatment involves administering a salt and sugar-based rehydration serum.

Some experts worry that recent flooding in Nigeria might lead to a spread in [cholera](#) infections. Gautam Chatterjee, the aid group's head of mission in Nigeria, said isolated cases have been reported.

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