

Haiti reports first deaths from cholera in three years

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Scanning electron microscope image of *Vibrio cholerae*. Credit: Wikipedia

At least seven people in Haiti have died from cholera, authorities said Sunday, raising fresh fears of a resurgent epidemic in the crisis-wracked Caribbean nation.

Cholera killed around 10,000 people in the wake of Haiti's 2010 earthquake, when United Nations workers helping the response introduced it to the country.

Nearly three years after Haiti's last confirmed case of the illness, the country's [health](#) ministry on Sunday said multiple suspected cases had been detected in the capital Port-au-Prince and in the coastal neighborhood of Cite Soleil.

At a press conference Sunday afternoon, Laure Adrien, director general of Haiti's public health ministry, said that seven or eight people had already died.

"Most of the victims died in the communities and could not go to hospitals," he said.

Adrien called for roadblocks, erected throughout the country in a protest against recent gas price hikes, to be lifted so that the infected could access [health facilities](#) or be reached by ambulances.

Protests and looting have rocked the already unstable country since September 11, when Prime Minister Ariel Henry announced a fuel price hike, saying subsidies were too expensive for one of the world's poorest states.

The [health ministry](#) said in an earlier statement that measures were being taken to limit the spread of the virus, including investigation of other possible cases, while calling for people to take increased hygiene precautions.

In the 2010 outbreak, the first viral infections were detected around the Artibonite River, where UN peacekeepers had dumped [fecal matter](#).

It was not until August 2016 that the UN officially recognized its role in the epidemic's start.

The UN said on Sunday it was "supporting efforts by the Government of Haiti to contain an outbreak of cholera and provide life-saving measures."

The last positive case before Sunday was detected in 2019, and in February 2022 the Ministry of Public Health held a ceremony to mark the official elimination of [cholera](#) in the country.

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