

Cholera outbreak kills 214 in Malawi

November 9 2022

Cholera has killed 214 people in Malawi but infections from one of the country's worst outbreaks in a decade have started to abate after peaking last month, the health ministry said on Wednesday.

The impoverished southern African country has recorded 7,499 cases of the disease since March, in what the United Nations said is the largest outbreak to hit the nation in 10 years.

The ministry of health said 174 new cases were reported on Tuesday, down from a high of more than 200 a day in the third week of October.

"Epidemics form a wave and as the statistics show, the numbers are going down after they peaked in October," Storm Kabuluzi, director of preventive health services at the health ministry told AFP.

"We are working to ensure that this will be the last wave by using a number of preventive interventions".

Earlier this week the World Health Organization (WHO) and the UN children's agency UNICEF said the country had received 2.9 million doses of oral cholera vaccine to step up its immunisation campaign.

Cholera is contracted from a bacterium that is generally transmitted through [contaminated food](#) or water.

It causes diarrhoea and vomiting, and can be especially dangerous for young children.

The [health ministry](#) appealed to faith leaders to encourage followers to seek treatment when reporting symptoms, as some were avoiding doing so on religious grounds.

In September, the WHO warned that after years of decline, the planet was witnessing a "worrying upsurge" in [cholera outbreaks](#), with [climate change](#) adding to traditional triggers such as poverty and conflict.

Worldwide, the disease affects between 1.3 million and four million people each year, causing up to 143,000 deaths.

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