

AN EPIDEMIC OF GASTROENTERITIS IN KARACHI

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ABSTRACT:

In Pakistan there have been many epidemics of Gastroenteritis reported in the last few years. The main reason for these epidemics are poor sanitary conditions in low economical area of Pakistan and unawareness among the people of Pakistan about the use of clean water. In this letter, I tried to highlight those factors of these epidemics which were involved in the recent epidemic of Gastroenteritis in Karachi. Also, I tried to suggest different measures which can be useful to prevent such epidemics in the region.

KEY WORDS: Gastroenteritis ; Epidemic ; Karachi.

MAIN TEXT:

Dear Madam, diarrhea is the passage of liquid stools with increased frequency per day. It may be acute or chronic. Chronic diarrhea can be an outcome of a serious etiology and can lead to serious consequences in children and adults¹. It is becoming a major problem of developing countries due to poor sanitary conditions² such as:

- Eating unhygienic food.
- Drinking unboiled water.
- Poor habits such as not washing hands before meal.
- Improper filtration of water from water plants.
- The frequent mixing of gutter lines with fresh water supply.

In Pakistan, most of the people are unaware of the risk in eating unhygienic food from road side cabin holders. Also, people living in low economical areas use unboiled water as routine or people living at high standards use so called mineral water' which bear no guarantee that is it a refilled bottle from nearby well or truly a freshly packed mineral water.

A recent outbreak occurred at Ibrahim hyderi (one of the low economical area of Karachi) from 11th- 19th nov-2015, in which over 1800 cases of diarrhea due to poor sanitation and contaminated water were reported^{3,4} in which majority of them were women and children. Few of the major causes of this outbreak were that residents of Ibrahim Hyderi did not boil or filter the water

they use for drinking and the water plants their proved inefficient in supplying clean water to the population and so the people are urged to use the contaminated water as their only source to fulfill their basic needs.

There have been many epidemics of gastroenteritis reported in all over Pakistan in last few years in which people received sewage water instead of fresh water despite of paying water and sewage taxes regularly⁵. The government should take measures such as:

- Making a committee who checks food quality everywhere.
- Organizing awareness programs in which people should be warned about the causes and consequences of diarrhea
- Spread awareness among people to use boil water.
- Make the filtration plants and sewage control enough efficient and keep an eye on employees.

These measures should be applied as soon as possible or the nation will persistently face such situations.

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A FOOL'S MIND IS AT THE MERCY OF HIS TONGUE AND A WISE MAN'S TONGUE IS UNDER THE CONTROL OF HIS MIND.

Hazrat Ali (Karmulha Wajhay)