

Travel recommendations for Syria and Israel

What is Poliomyelitis?

Poliomyelitis is a highly infectious disease caused by wild poliovirus. It affects the nervous system and can cause paralysis and even death in a short period of time. There are three types of viruses; Type 1, 2 or 3. Humans are the only reservoir of infection. The virus is found in the bowel and throat of infected individuals. Polio enters the body through the mouth via contaminated water or food. The virus then multiplies in the intestine and is excreted by the affected person via stools and this can possibly infect others.

Symptoms of Polio

Most people that are infected may remain completely without symptoms while 10% of cases develop mild symptoms such as fever, malaise, nausea and vomiting. However after exposure and an incubation period of one to two weeks the virus may spread from the digestive tract to the central nervous system and cause meningitis and neural damage resulting in paralysis.

Treatment for Polio

There is **no treatment available** for the virus.

The disease is prevented by **immunization**.

Improved sanitation, clean water and good hygiene practices are essential to limit the spread of infection

Travel advice: The below countries had reported polio cases;

- Deir AL Zour province of Syria
- Southern and Central Israel
- Pakistan
- Cairo
- West Bank and Gaza

Therefore if **travelling to the mentioned places;**

- Make sure that you are up-to-date with the vaccination schedule against poliomyelitis
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water after using the lavatory
- Drink only bottled drinks. Avoid tap water consumption and for washing of teeth
- Cook own food well or from reliable sources only
- Avoid such places altogether (unless necessary) due to the political unrest.

