

Health facility action plan in the event of acute flaccid paralysis: treating polio in Kenya. Colour lithograph by Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation, ca. 2000.

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MINISTRY OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND SANITATION
DIVISION OF DISEASE SURVEILLANCE AND RESPONSE (DDSR)

TO ALL HEALTH WORKERS IN THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA

ACUTE FLACCID PARALYSIS (AFP) is any case with weakness or floppiness in the limbs of sudden onset not due to injury, in a child less than 15 years of age or any case in which a clinician suspects polio. All suspected cases of Poliomyelitis, Gullain-Barre Syndrome or Transverse Myelitis should be reported as AFP and the following steps should be taken:

ACTION AT THE HEALTH FACILITY LEVEL

1. WHAT TO DO AFTER IDENTIFICATION OF AFP:

- ⇒ Fill case investigation form for every case of AFP reported; the original form will accompany the specimen to the laboratory.
- ⇒ Immediately collect two stool specimens 24 – 48 hours apart.
- ⇒ Send them using a vaccine carrier with frozen icepacks to KEMRI for virus isolation.
- ⇒ Stool specimens should be collected within 14 days from the date of the onset of paralysis.
- ⇒ If this is not possible, collect stool specimens within 60 days of onset of paralysis.

2. STORAGE AND TRANSPORT

- Place the specimen in a clean screw-capped (internal screws) plastic container and seal it.
- Label the specimen with the name of patient, date of birth and date of collection.
- Keep the specimen refrigerated at 0 – 8° C under frozen icepacks, or in a refrigerator. Only use a laboratory refrigerator.
- Use vaccine carriers with frozen icepacks to transport the specimens to KEMRI.
- Such vaccine carriers should be kept as specimen carriers and properly labeled as such.
- Make sure the specimen reaches the laboratory (KEMRI) within 72 hours of stool collection.
- Use public transport, Securicor, or any other means to take specimens to KEMRI and inform KEPI of its arrival.
- If unable to take specimens to KEMRI inform DDSR / PMO / MOH / DDSC as soon as possible.

3. IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- KEMRI is the only virological laboratory for virus isolations in Kenya. All specimens should be sent to: KEMRI, P.O. Box 54628, Nairobi. Fax: **2726115** Telephone: **2717221/2722541/2**
- Ideally, specimens should be collected within 14 days of onset of paralysis.
(This is when the quantity of virus is highest in stool).



For more information contact Head, Division of Disease Surveillance and Response /
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