



UK Health
Security
Agency



Polio is spreading

in London, US and Israel

What is polio?

Polio is a disease caused by the poliovirus. The virus can infect the spinal cord and cause permanent paralysis or even death. Polio is preventable, only by immunisation.

There is no cure for polio.

There are now

thousands of children

under 10 who are at risk **in the UK** because they are not up to date with their routine vaccines.



75% of people (approximately) who are infected with polio will not experience any symptoms and will not know they are contagious



For every case of paralysis, between **100 and 1,000** people have been infected

Why is polio circulating in sewage in London?

This is happening because not enough people are being vaccinated. That is why we are offering a booster dose of polio vaccine to all children aged 1 to 9 in London. For more information about the vaccines you can read the leaflet in English here www.gov.uk/government/publications/polio-booster-campaign-resources and in Yiddish. See bottom of leaflet more more information.

Who is at risk?



newborn babies



children under 2 years

who have not completed their polio immunisation schedule



anyone not fully immunised

including children, adults and pregnant women



immunocompromised individuals

speak to your doctor if the polio booster is right for you



The only protection is immunisation

The only protection for you or your child is immunisation. Check your child's red book or contact your GP practice to make sure your child is up to date.

The polio immunisation is proven highly effective

1950s

There are around 4,000 polio cases each year in the UK

1955

The polio immunisation developed by Dr Jonas Salk is licensed

1956

Polio vaccine is introduced in the UK

1970s

The last outbreak of polio in the UK

1984

Last natural case of polio in the UK

2003

Europe declared polio free

Polio spreads through:



contact with the fecal matter (poo) of an infected person



droplets in a sneeze or cough from someone with infection

Symptoms

Approximately 25% will experience flu-like symptoms such as:

- fever
- fatigue
- stomach pain
- sickness
- sore throat
- headache

More serious symptoms can take up to 30 days to appear and include:



severe headache



severe muscle pains



stiffness in the neck and back



dislike of bright lights



paralysis or even death

2022

Children in London offered a polio booster. This follows a highly successful polio booster campaign in Israel. All families asked to check if everyone is up to date with their routine vaccinations now.