



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
ABOUT
YELLOW
FEVER

APRIL 2023



**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH PROMOTION, EDUCATION
& COMMUNICATION**

1. What is Yellow Fever?

Yellow fever is a viral infection that is spread to humans through a bite from a mosquito carrying the Yellow Fever virus. It causes fever, yellowing of the eyes and bleeding from any body openings such as mouth, nose, eyes, ears etc. The “yellow” in the name refers to the jaundice (Nkaka-jaundice) that affects some patients.

2. What are the signs and symptoms of Yellow Fever?

After three to six days of infection with the Yellow Fever virus the following signs and symptoms usually appear:

- Rapid onset fever
- Abdominal pain
- Diarrhoea
- Vomiting
- General body weakness
- Yellowing of the eyes
- Loss of appetite
- Bleeding from any body openings

Some patients may develop yellow eyes, abdominal pain, bleeding from the mouth, nose, eyes and stomach.

3. Why is the Ministry of Health vaccinating children and adults against yellow fever?

There are confirmed cases of Yellow Fever outbreaks in the country and Uganda has low rates of vaccination against yellow fever. Besides, Uganda is an endemic country and is susceptible to yellow fever transmission. Therefore, immunising children at 9 months will protect them against Yellow Fever disease. Yellow fever vaccine is a single dose given once in a lifetime.

4. If yellow fever is a single dose in a life time, what happens to those people who were vaccinated before?

Those people that have already been vaccinated will not receive another dose of yellow fever vaccine. The previous vaccination dose they received is sufficient for a lifetime.

5. How is Yellow Fever spread?

The Yellow Fever virus is spread by mosquitoes. Mosquitoes carrying the Yellow Fever virus transmit the virus to humans through a bite

6. Who is at risk of getting Yellow Fever?

Anyone who is bitten by a mosquito infected with Yellow Fever can get the disease. However it is important to note that some members of the community may be more at risk of contracting the disease than others, for example:

- anyone who is not immunised against Yellow Fever
- people who work or live-in forests

7. How can Yellow Fever be prevented?

Yellow fever mass vaccination: is the most effective preventive measure against Yellow Fever. The Ministry of Health with support of partners has planned to conduct yellow fever preventive mass vaccination campaign in three phases in a bid to eliminate Yellow Fever from Uganda. The first phase will be implemented in 6 regions of Kabale, Hoima, Kabarole, Arua, Gulu and Lira starting in May 2023. It will target children aged 9 months and adults aged up to 60 years.

The Yellow Fever vaccine is safe, affordable, highly effective and is available in the health facilities. One dose of the Yellow Fever vaccine is enough to provide life-long protection against Yellow Fever. Thus, yellow vaccination is given once in a lifetime.

Mosquito control: reduce or eliminate potential mosquito breeding sites such as stagnant water and bushes around homes. In addition, sleep under insecticide-treated nets every night.

Personal protection: wear long sleeved shirts or blouses, trousers, use mosquito repellants and avoid long walks in forests or jungles.

Community level action: the risk of Yellow Fever transmission can be reduced by, eliminating potential mosquito breeding sites such as used containers around the homes

8. How is Yellow Fever treated?

There is no specific treatment for Yellow Fever. Health workers can only offer supportive treatment to treat dehydration and fever. Bacterial infections linked to the diseases can be treated with antibiotics. It is important to seek early treatment when symptoms show

9. Where can one go for vaccination against yellow fever?

Vaccination against yellow fever is being done in government health facilities. However, to boost the routine yellow fever vaccination, Ministry of Health will conduct yellow fever preventive mass vaccination campaign in six regions that are currently at high risk of contracting yellow fever disease. These include Kabare, Kabarole, Hoima, Arua, Gulu and Lira regions.

10. Will yellow fever vaccination be done at a cost especially in government health facilities?

Yellow fever vaccination in government health facilities is free of charge, however, in private health facilities it is provided at a cost.

11. What happens when a person is not treated?

If a person is not treated, they progress to a life-threatening phase with the following signs and symptoms:

Yellowing of the eyes (jaundice) and skin.

- Stomachache
- Vomiting
- Reduced urination
- Slow heart rate
- Liver and kidney failure
- Seizures
- Diarrhoea

Health workers can offer supportive care to improve health such as treating dehydration due to fever and providing basic counseling. In case you fall ill, it is important to seek immediate supportive care at your nearest health facility to increase your chances of surviving the disease. NOTE: Persons with Yellow Fever disease should be taken to the health facility immediately to avoid these complications and death.

12. Should everyone in the community/country be vaccinated against Yellow Fever?

If resources allow, everyone from a community or country where a case has been confirmed in a laboratory should be vaccinated. However, the following people should NOT be vaccinated:

- Children aged less than **9 months**
- Pregnant women except during a Yellow Fever outbreak when the risk of infection is high

13. Role of Community Leaders and Community Health Workers in prevention and control of yellow fever

Every community leader or community health worker such as Village Health Team members should actively educate communities on the signs & symptoms, mode of spread and prevention of Yellow Fever.

KEY MESSAGES

- Yellow fever is a serious disease that spreads by infected mosquitoes.
- The most effective way of preventing Yellow Fever is through vaccination and/or mosquito control.
- Yellow fever is not transmitted from person to person by contact.
- Remove potential mosquito breeding sites such as stagnant water and bushes around your home Sleep under an insecticide treated mosquito net every night to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes.
- Vaccination against yellow fever is done once in a lifetime.
- Parents and caregivers with children aged 9 months should take them to health facilities and outreach vaccination posts for vaccination against yellow fever during routine immunization and the forthcoming yellow fever preventive mass vaccination campaign due to start in May 2023.
- All adults aged up to 60 years should go to health facilities and outreach vaccination posts for yellow fever vaccination during the yellow fever mass vaccination campaign.
- People who have been vaccinated against yellow fever before should NOT get for another dose of yellow fever vaccine. Remember, yellow fever vaccine is a single dose given once in a lifetime.
- Any reactions (AEFIs) that may follow yellow fever vaccination should be reported immediately to the health worker for appropriate management and investigation.
- **Report any side effects to the nearest health facility, DHO, National Drug Authority via a) Toll free line 0800 101 999 b) dial *284*99# c) WhatsApp 0740 002 070 d)**
<https://primaryreporting.who-umc.org/UG> Notify the health worker about any suspected yellow fever case at the nearest health facility. Early treatment prevents complications and death