

Leprosy can be easily
cured with MDT.
Available free of charge at all
health centres



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Guide to **Eliminate Leprosy** as a Public Health Problem

Multidrug therapy cures leprosy, stops
transmission and prevents disabilities.
Available free of charge at all health centres.



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World Health Organization

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To eliminate leprosy
we need to detect
all patients and cure
them with MDT.



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The Final Push to Eliminate Leprosy

Leprosy will be eliminated when we detect all patients and cure them by using multidrug therapy (MDT).

Elimination means bringing the disease burden down to a very low level. This will lead to a reduction in the source of infection, so that leprosy is likely to disappear naturally as it already has in many parts of the world. WHO has defined “elimination” as a prevalence rate of less than 1 case per 10,000 inhabitants.



Improving access to leprosy diagnosis and treatment is crucial.



MDT should be available free of charge at all health centres.



This final push to eliminate leprosy involves:

Making leprosy diagnosis and treatment available, free of charge, at all health centres, particularly in endemic areas.

Enabling every health worker to diagnose and treat leprosy.

Dispelling the fear of leprosy, improving awareness of its early signs, and motivating people to seek treatment.

Ensuring that all leprosy patients are cured.

This guide should help you to:

Diagnose leprosy cases based on clinical signs.

Cure all leprosy patients with a **complete** course of MDT.

Manage complications and prevent disabilities.

Set up good records to **keep track of** patients and the local leprosy situation.

Give **correct information** about leprosy to the community.

**We need to dispel
the fear of leprosy...**



**...and improve
awareness
of its early signs.**



What Is Leprosy?

Leprosy is a communicable disease caused by bacteria. It mainly affects the skin and nerves. It progresses slowly with an average incubation period of 3 years. Leprosy can affect all ages and both sexes. Leprosy can be cured. MDT kills the bacteria and stops the spread of the disease. Leprosy patients can lead completely normal lives. If detected early and treated with MDT, leprosy will not lead to deformities.



Patients can lead completely normal lives.



The best way to prevent the spread of leprosy is to treat all patients with MDT.

How To Diagnose Leprosy

Signs of Leprosy

A leprosy patient is someone who:
has a skin patch or patches with a definite loss of sensation;
and has not completed a full course of treatment with multidrug therapy.

Leprosy patches:

- Can be pale or reddish or copper-coloured;
- Can be flat or raised;
- Do not itch;
- Usually do not hurt;
- Lack sensation to heat, touch or pain;
- Can appear anywhere.

Other signs of leprosy include:

- Reddish or skin-coloured nodules or smooth, shiny diffuse thickening of the skin without a loss of sensation



Leprosy patches...

...can be pale or reddish or copper-coloured.

...can be flat or raised.



Leprosy patches...

...can appear anywhere.

...usually do not hurt.

...do not
itch.

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