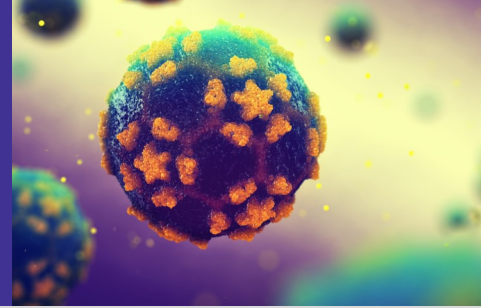


# Poliovirus (Polio)



Polio is a life-threatening disease caused by poliovirus. The virus is very contagious and spreads easily from person to person. Polio affects the nervous system and causes muscle weakness. In some cases, polio can cause paralysis or death. There is no cure for polio, but it is preventable through safe and effective vaccination.

## How is it spread?

*The polio virus is very contagious and enters the body through the mouth.*

- ▶ Someone can get polio through:
  - ▶ Contact with the poop of an infected person.
  - ▶ Droplets from a sneeze or cough of an infected person.
  - ▶ Touching or placing objects in your mouth that are contaminated with small amounts of poop.
- ▶ Polio can be spread by people who have the virus but no symptoms.

## What are the signs and symptoms?

*Most people who are sick with polio will not have any symptoms.*

- ▶ About 25% of people will have flu-like symptoms that include:
  - ▶ Sore throat
  - ▶ Nausea
  - ▶ Fever
  - ▶ Headache
  - ▶ Tiredness
  - ▶ Stomach Pain
- ▶ In very rare cases, people with polio will develop serious symptoms that include:
  - ▶ Meningitis (inflammation of the brain and spinal cord)
  - ▶ Paralysis or weakness in the arms and/or legs

## What are the treatment options?

*There is no cure for polio.*

Physical or occupational therapy can help improve arm, leg, or muscle weakness, or other long-term outcomes.

## How can it be prevented?

*Polio is preventable through safe and effective vaccination!*

- ▶ Children should get vaccinated when they are 2 months, 4 months, and 6–18 months old, and again before kindergarten.
- ▶ More than 99% of people who get all recommended doses of the polio vaccine will be protected.
- ▶ The vaccine used to prevent polio in the U.S. does not cause polio.
- ▶ Good hygiene and hand washing practices can prevent spreading of the polio virus.

*Check your vaccination status through the [Wisconsin Immunization Registry](#).*

