

Iraq announces first cholera death since new outbreak

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Scanning electron microscope image of *Vibrio cholerae*. Credit: Wikipedia

A cholera outbreak in Iraq claimed its first victim Tuesday, with 17 new cases recorded in the country within 24 hours, a health ministry spokesperson said.

The death was recorded in the northern province of Kirkuk, the ministry's Seif al-Badr was quoted as saying by [state media](#).

"Over the past 24 hours, 17 new cases were detected, bringing the total to 76 cases registered in Iraq since the start of the year," he said.

The outbreak was first officially reported earlier this month, with Kirkuk accounting for one of the 13 cases confirmed at that time.

The other infections were mostly concentrated in neighbouring Sulaimaniyah province, in the autonomous Kurdistan region.

The country's last broad [cholera outbreak](#) dates back to 2015, Badr had said previously, with the central provinces of Baghdad and Babil to its south the worst affected.

Cholera is an acute diarrhoeal disease that is treatable with antibiotics and hydration but can kill within hours without [medical attention](#).

It is caused by a germ that is typically transmitted by poor sanitation. People become infected when they swallow food or water carrying the bug.

According to the World Health Organization, researchers estimate that annually there are between 1.3 million and four million cases of cholera worldwide, leading to between 21,000 and 143,000 deaths.

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