

**U.S. Interests Section  
Havana, Cuba  
Security Message – Cholera Outbreak  
August 20, 2013**

This message is to inform U.S. citizens residing in or visiting Cuba that media reports have indicated that cases of cholera have been identified in the city of Havana, possibly linked to a reported outbreak of cholera in eastern Cuba. The Panamerican Health Organization (PAHO) issued an epidemiological alert noting the presence of cholera in Cuba and confirming that foreign travelers have contracted cholera during recent trips to Cuba.

Eating or drinking fecally contaminated food or water is the main risk factor. Unsterilized water, food from street vendors, raw fish dishes (e.g. ceviche) and inadequately cooked (e.g. steamed) shellfish are common sources of infection.

**We urge you to follow public health recommendations and guidelines, such as safe food and water precautions and frequent hand washing to help prevent cholera infection.** The Cuban Ministry of Public Health is urging people to comply with sanitary measures associated with personal hygiene, water and food. The [U.S. Centers for Disease Control](#) (CDC) and [World Health Organization](#) both provide information about cholera to the travelling public.

U.S. citizens traveling abroad should regularly monitor the [U.S. Department of State's, Bureau of Consular Affairs website](#), where the current [Worldwide Caution](#), [Travel Warnings](#), [Travel Alerts](#), and [Country Specific Information](#) can be found. The U.S. Interests Section also encourages U.S. citizens to review "[A Safe Trip Abroad](#)," which includes valuable security information for those both living and traveling abroad. Follow us on [Twitter](#) and the Bureau of Consular Affairs page on [Facebook](#) as well. You can also download our free [Smart Traveler iPhone App](#) to have travel information at your fingertips. In addition to information on the Internet, travelers may obtain up-to-date information on security conditions by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States and Canada, or outside the United States and Canada on a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).

[U.S. Interests Section](#)

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For after hours emergencies, please call the main switchboard at (+53)(7) 839-4100 and dial 1 to speak with the emergency operator.