

WARNING: UNUSUALLY HIGH NUMBER OF GASTROINTESTINAL ILLNESS CASES IN BRONKHORSTSPRUIT AND SURROUNDING AREAS

The public is alerted to cases of gastrointestinal illness affecting Bronkhorstspuit, Zithobeni, Rethabiseng, Ekandustria, Ekangala and Dark City in the City of Tshwane, Gauteng.

Between 7-18 October 2026, 408 cases of gastrointestinal illness were reported, with young children under four years old mostly affected. No deaths have been reported to date. Laboratory tests conducted on patient samples detected several disease-causing bacteria, however, no cholera bacteria were detected.

A number of infectious pathogens may cause gastrointestinal illness. Young children, especially those under five years of age, older people and people with weakened immune systems are at increased risk of serious illness. Gastrointestinal illness may cause any of the following symptoms:

- Diarrhoea
- Vomiting
- Stomach cramps or abdominal pain
- Fever or general weakness
- Dehydration, including reduced urination, dry mouth, dizziness or unusual drowsiness

While arranging medical care, give small, frequent sips of oral rehydration solution if the person is conscious and able to drink, prepared using safe water and according to the instructions.

Residents of the affected areas are advised to seek medical attention promptly if any of these symptoms develop after possible exposure to contaminated water.

Official advisory from the Department of Health:

- Use safe water supplied by municipal water tankers or another officially confirmed safe source for drinking, cooking, food preparation and personal hygiene.
- Use affected tap water only for flushing toilets, as advised by the City of Tshwane.
- Discard previously stored tap water, and washing and disinfecting water storage containers before refilling them with safe water.
- Store water in clean, covered containers and avoiding dipping hands or cups into the stored water.

Prevention of gastrointestinal illness

- Wash your hands with soap and safe water.
- Keep food preparation areas and utensils clean.
- Use safe water when preparing food and drinks.

Stay informed

Residents from affected areas are urged to remain vigilant and follow official announcements/updates from the City of Tshwane and health authorities. Unverified information should not be shared as this may cause alarm. All suspected cases should report to nearest healthcare facilities.

For the official government statement, visit:

<https://www.gov.za/news/media-statements/joint-media-statement-ministries-health-water-and-sanitation-gauteng>

Additional resources

NICD website: <https://www.nicd.ac.za/diseases-a-z-index/mpox-2/>

NICD Clinical Advice Hotline (health workers only): 0800 212 552