

POLIOMYELITIS
PRIMARY SCHOOL WORK SHEET

What is Poliomyelitis?

1 Which part of the body does polio mainly affect?

History

2 How do we know that polio existed in 3700 BC?
(Read the paragraph under "History". This picture will help as well!)

3 Polio was first called Heine-Medin disease. Why?

4 As sanitation improved, it became more likely for people to get polio. Explain this.



How is polio spread?

5 How does one get polio?

6 The human body's natural defense mechanisms usually fight the polio virus and prevent illness. Sometimes (in 1% of cases) this is not the case. What happens then?

What are the symptoms of polio?

7 Describe the minor symptoms (signs of illness) that are displayed by most people who get polio.

- 8 What are the symptoms of:
- a. Nonparalytic aseptic (viral) meningitis
 - b. Flaccid paralysis

Photographic captions

9 Read the captions under the photographs. You will see that paralytic polio has three forms: spinal, bulbar and bulbo-spinal.

Now complete this column:

| | Spinal Polio | Bulbar Polio | Bulbo-spinal Polio |
|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Symptoms | | | |
| Part of the body affected | | | |
| Final result of the disease | | | |

10 Summarise the disease under the following headings:

- a. Incubation period
- b. Seriousness of the disease
- c. Diagnosis
- d. Period of contagiousness

Development of a vaccine

- 11 Name the kinds of treatments that patients received before the 1920s.
- 12 Draw a timeline that shows the development of a vaccine against polio.

Polio in South Africa

- 13 When did South Africa experience major polio epidemics?
- 14 Dr James Gear made a huge contribution to the fight against polio in South Africa. Write down what he did.
- 15 When did the first mass vaccination in South Africa start?
- 16 What was the result of the mass vaccination campaigns?
- 17 Do you think we still have polio in South Africa? Explain your answer.

Is there treatment for polio?

- 18 Although polio has no cure, it can be treated. How?



- 19 Study this photograph of two young polio patients in physiotherapy. What parts of their bodies do you think are being treated?
- 20 What has the World Health Organisation done to fight polio?
- 21 Has this work paid off? Explain your answer.

The Iron Lung

- 22 Explain in your own words how the iron lung works and why patients could not live without it.
- 23 Why is a plastic dome over the patient's head sometimes used?
- 24 Look at this picture of a young man in an iron lung.



- a. What is the use for the mirror above his head?
 - b. How would you feel if you had to spend years in an iron lung?
- 25 Iron lungs are no longer used today. What is used instead?