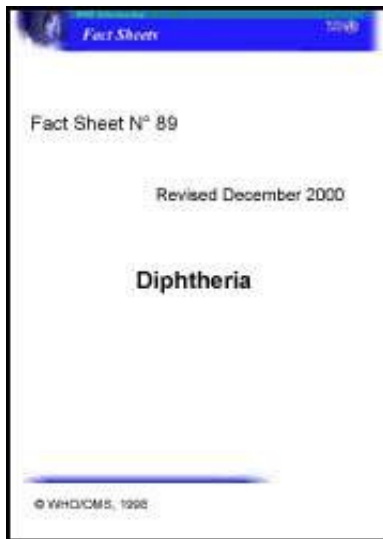





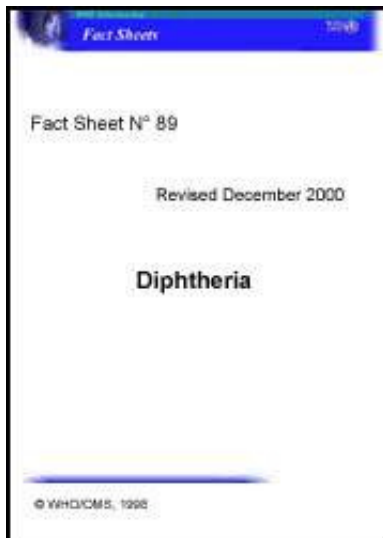







[Home](#) > [ar.cn.de.en.es.fr.id.it.ph.po.ru.sw](#)



- ➔  **Fact sheet No 089: Diphtheria - Revised December 2000 (WHO, 2000, 2 p.)**
-  **(introduction...)**
  -  **What is Diphtheria?**
  -  **How Can an Epidemic be Controlled?**
  -  **Incidence Rates in the Current Epidemic in the Newly Independent States of the Former Soviet Union**

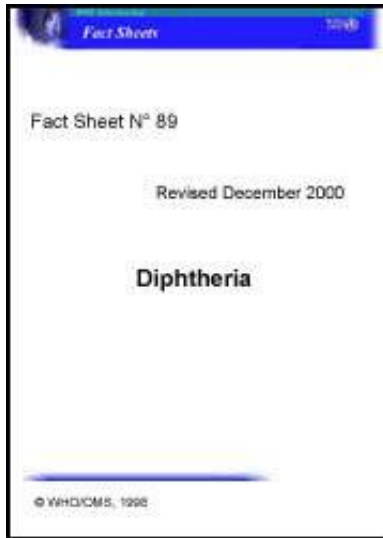
[Home](#) > [ar.cn.de.en.es.fr.id.it.ph.po.ru.sw](#)



-  **Fact sheet No 089: Diphtheria - Revised December 2000 (WHO, 2000, 2 p.)**
- ➔  **(introduction...)**
  -  **What is Diphtheria?**
  -  **How Can an Epidemic be Controlled?**
  -  **Incidence Rates in the Current Epidemic in the Newly Independent States of the Former Soviet Union**

**Revised December 2000**

[Home](#) > [ar](#).[cn](#).[de](#).[en](#).[es](#).[fr](#).[id](#).[it](#).[ph](#).[po](#).[ru](#).[sw](#)



 **Fact sheet No 089: Diphtheria - Revised December 2000 (WHO, 2000, 2 p.)**

 **(introduction...)**

  **What is Diphtheria?**

 **How Can an Epidemic be Controlled?**

 **Incidence Rates in the Current Epidemic in the Newly Independent States of the Former Soviet Union**

## What is Diphtheria?

**Diphtheria is an infectious disease spreading from person to person by respiratory droplets from the throat through coughing and sneezing.**

**The disease normally breaks out 2 to 5 days after infection.**

**Diphtheria usually affects the tonsils, pharynx, larynx and occasionally the skin.**

**Symptoms range from a moderately sore throat to toxic life-threatening diphtheria of the larynx or of the lower and upper respiratory tracts. Diphtheria is often complicated by diphtheric myocarditis (toxic damage to heart muscles) and**

## **neuritis (toxic damage to peripheral nerves).**

**The disease can be fatal - between 5% and 10% of diphtheria patients die, even if properly treated. Untreated, the disease claims even more lives.**

**Untreated patients are infectious for 2 to 3 weeks.**

**Treatment consists of immediate administration of diphtheria antitoxin and antibiotics.**

**Antibiotic treatment usually renders patients non-infectious within 24 hours.**

**Unless immunized, children and adults may repeatedly be infected with the disease.**



[Home](#) > [ar](#).[cn](#).[de](#).[en](#).[es](#).[fr](#).[id](#).[it](#).[ph](#).[po](#).[ru](#).[sw](#)

 **Fact sheet No 089: Diphtheria - Revised December 2000 (WHO, 2000, 2 p.)**

 **(*introduction...*)**

 **What is Diphtheria?**

 **How Can an Epidemic be Controlled?**

 **Incidence Rates in the Current Epidemic in the Newly Independent States of the Former Soviet Union**



## How Can an Epidemic be Controlled?

**The most effective method is mass immunization of the entire population.**

**Those individuals who are in close contact with a sick person should be identified and treated immediately with antibiotics. The disease should be diagnosed early and proper case management procedures (i.e. immediate treatment and hospitalization) should be followed in order to prevent complications and death.**

[Home](#) > [ar](#).[cn](#).[de](#).[en](#).[es](#).[fr](#).[id](#).[it](#).[ph](#).[po](#).[ru](#).[sw](#)

 **Fact sheet No 089: Diphtheria - Revised December 2000  
(WHO, 2000, 2 p.)**  
 ***(introduction...)***



 **What is Diphtheria?**

 **How Can an Epidemic be Controlled?**

 **Incidence Rates in the Current Epidemic in the Newly Independent States of the Former Soviet Union**

## **Incidence Rates in the Current Epidemic in the Newly Independent States of the Former Soviet Union**

**Incidence range from 0.5 - 1 per 100,000 population in Armenia, Estonia, Lithuania and Uzbekistan, to 27 - 32 per 100,000 in Russia and Tajikistan.**

**Case fatality rates range from 2-3% in Russia and Ukraine, to 6-10% in Armenia, Kazakhstan, Moldova and Latvia, and to 17-23% in Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkmenistan.**

---

**For further information, journalists can contact Gregory Hartl, WHO, Geneva. Telephone (41 22) 791 4458. Fax (41 22) 791 4858. E-Mail: [hartlg@who.ch](mailto:hartlg@who.ch)**

**All WHO Press Releases, Fact Sheets and Features as well as other information on**

**this subject can be obtained on Internet on the WHO home page**  
**<http://www.who.ch/>**

**© WHO/OMS, 1998**

