

LEGIONNAIRES DISEASE

PERSONAL HEALTH FACT SHEET

What is Legionnaires Disease?

*Legionnaires Disease is a bacterial disease that causes a severe, sometimes life threatening, pneumonia. This disease is airborne and results when someone inhales the aerosolized bacteria from an infected water source as may be found in an air-conditioning cooling tower, hot water system, or humidifier. Legionnaires is **not** spread by person-to-person contact.*

Who can get Legionnaires Disease?

The disease occurs most frequently in older individuals with most Legionnaires cases diagnosed in persons at least 50 years of age. Persons who smoke or have longstanding illness like chronic lung disease, diabetes, kidney disease, and cancer or have a depressed immune system are particularly prone to infection.

How long after exposure to the bacteria do symptoms begin?

It generally takes 5-6 days (range 2-10 days) from exposure to the often sudden onset of symptoms, especially high fever.

What should I do if I have these symptoms?

Legionnaires Disease can be life threatening and often requires hospitalization. If you suspect you may be infected, **seek medical attention immediately**. Early diagnosis and prompt treatment helps insure a better response to therapy and may assist public health officials in identifying the source of infection.

SYMPTOMS OF LEGIONNAIRES

- Lack of appetite
- Muscle aches
- Extreme exhaustion
- High fever (102F - 105F)
- Other signs of pneumonia
- Cough without phlegm
- Chills
- Chest pain
- Rapid or labored breathing



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