

Protect Yourself from Leptospirosis after a Storm



Leptospirosis is a bacterial disease that can increase after hurricanes or floods when people may have to wade through contaminated water or use it for drinking or bathing.

People can get leptospirosis when they have contact with:

- urine from infected animals, which include rodents, dogs, livestock, pigs and wildlife.
- floodwater, freshwater like rivers or streams, unsafe tap water, wet soil, or food contaminated with the urine of infected animals.



The bacteria can enter the body through cuts or scratches or through the eyes, nose, or mouth.

Prevention



Do not wade, swim, bathe, or put your head in, or swallow floodwater or any fresh water source that may be contaminated by floodwater or animal urine.



Cover cuts or scratches with waterproof bandages or other coverings that seal out water.



Do not walk outside barefoot. Wear waterproof protective clothing, gloves, closed shoes, or boots near water or wet soil that may be contaminated by animal urine or floodwater.



Treat potentially contaminated water to make it safe for drinking by boiling or chemically treating.



Prevent rodent infestation by keeping food and trash in closed containers and trapping rodents.

Learn the Symptoms

Flu-like symptoms

Headaches

Muscle aches

Fever and chills

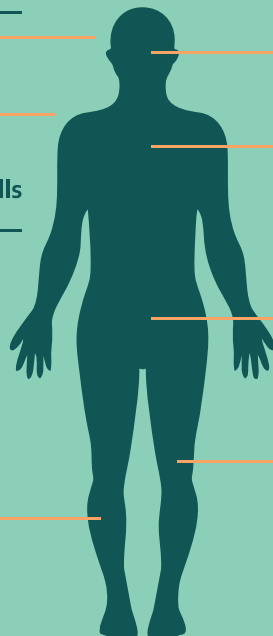
Conjunctivitis (red eyes)

Cough

Stomach pain, vomiting and diarrhea

Yellowing of the skin and eye rash

Skin rash



Get Treatment



If you have symptoms of leptospirosis, see a doctor as soon as possible. Early treatment with antibiotics may help prevent the illness from becoming more severe and reduce your illness period. Without treatment, leptospirosis symptoms can get worse. People can develop kidney and liver failure, meningitis, difficulty in breathing, bleeding and in some cases, death.