

<http://www.legionella.com>

Date: Wed, 17 Apr 2002 23:34:21 -0400 (EDT)
From: ProMED-mail <promed@promed.isid.harvard.edu>
Subject: PRO/EDR> Legionellosis - Australia (Melbourne): alert

LEGIONELLOSIS - AUSTRALIA (MELBOURNE): ALERT

A ProMED-mail post

<<http://www.promed.org>>

ProMED-mail is a program of the International Society for Infectious Diseases

<<http://www.isid.org>>

[see also:

2001

Legionellosis, hospital - Australia (Melbourne) 20010108.0059

Legionellosis - Norway 20010831.2076

Legionellosis - Norway (02) 20010906.2123

Legionellosis - Spain (Pamplona) 20010822.1979

Legionellosis - Spain (Pamplona) (02) 20010822.1979

Legionellosis - Spain (Murcia) 20010711.1340

Legionellosis - Spain (Murcia) (08) 20011017.2555

Legionellosis - France (Paris) 20010717.1379

Legionellosis - UK (London): alert 20010630.1249

Legionellosis, automobile plant - USA (Ohio) 20010315.0531

2000

Legionellosis - Australia (Melbourne) 20000328.0451

Legionellosis - Australia (Melbourne) (09) 20000525.0833

Legionellosis - New Zealand, UK, ex Australia 20000503.0673

1999

Legionellosis - Australia (Victoria) 19990801.1310

Legionellosis - Australia 19990801.1309

1998

Legionellosis - Australia (Melbourne) 19981031.2131

Legionellosis - Australia (Melbourne) (04) 19981224.2437

Legionellosis - Australia (Victoria) 19980714.1325

Legionellosis - Australia (Victoria) (03) 19980722.1388]

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From: ProMED-mail <promed@promedmail.org>

Source: News.com.au (Australia) 17 Apr 2002

<http://news.com.au/common/story_page/0,4057,4151978%255E1243,00.html>

Victoria's chief health officer says anyone with flu-like symptoms [it is not stated if the patients had pneumonia or how the diagnosis was made. - Mod.LL] who was around the corner of Collins and Swanston streets in Melbourne last month [March 2002] should be checked for Legionnaires' disease. So far 3 men, aged 29, 58, and 85, who visited the same area of the city center last month have contracted Legionnaires'. Doctor John Carnie says 2 of them have been discharged from hospital, while the third is still undergoing treatment.

Dr Carnie says anyone with flu-like symptoms who worked or visited the area in the past 3-4 weeks should seek medical attention. The illness causes headache, fever, chills, muscle aches and pains, followed by respiratory problems and pneumonia developed over 3 or 4 days. Onset can be up to 10 days after the initial contact with the bacteria.

ProMED-mail

<promed@promedmail.org

[If indeed the cases are related by molecular fingerprinting, there should be more than just being in an area as a risk factor such as exposure in a closed location from contaminated aerosolized water, a major reservoir for legionellosis, such as air conditioners, evaporative condensers and whirlpools. One interesting community cluster of legionellosis was associated with a fruit and vegetable ultrasonic mist machine in a grocery store. Although pneumonia remains the most common clinical presentation, extrapulmonary manifestations, which can be useful in considering the diagnosis, include gastrointestinal symptoms (particularly diarrhea) and mental status changes out of proportion to fever and hypoxemia. Alerting the public and health care community will be helpful in rooting out other possible cases as it has been suggested that only 3 percent of sporadic cases of legionellosis are diagnosed correctly. Some cases may present as Pontiac fever, an acute, self-limited flu-like illness without pneumonia. - Mod.LL

Mahoney FJ, Hoge CW, Farley TA, et al: Community-wide outbreak of legionnaire's disease associated with a grocery store mist machine.
J Infect Dis 1992; 165: 736-739.]

[Age over 50 is a risk factor (failing immune system?).

The 1999 Dutch flower show epidemic was caused by a contaminated fountain:

Legionellosis, flower show - Netherlands: background 19990317.0403

Other cases were traced to saunas:

Legionellosis, fatal, sauna-related - Netherlands(02) 19980202.0209

Legionella advisory, spa - Netherlands 19990404.0546

In the absence of a mist machine, fountain or sauna at that street corner, the most likely source would be a cooling tower on top of a nearby building. - Mod.JW]

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