

LEGIONELLOSIS - AUSTRALIA (02): ex INDONESIA (BALI) ALERT

A ProMED-mail post <<http://www.promedmail.org>>

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

[1]

Date: Wed 19 Jan 2011

Source: Government of Western Australia, Department of Health [edited]
<http://www.health.wa.gov.au/press/view_press.cfm?id=957>

The Department of Health has been notified of a 4th Western Australian diagnosed with legionnaires' disease following travel to Bali since December 2010. Acting chief health officer, Dr Andy Robertson, said while the exact source of the disease remained unknown, all the Western Australians recently diagnosed had stayed at the Ramayana Resort and Spa Hotel in Central Kuta.

"The Indonesian Government has been advised of the Australian cases by the Australian Government, and is working with the World Health Organisation to investigate the possible source of the disease," Dr Robertson said.

Dr Robertson said the early symptoms of legionnaires' disease are typically similar to severe 'flu-like' illness. "Early symptoms may include fever, chills, muscle soreness, headaches, tiredness, reduced appetite, and diarrhoea, along with dry cough and breathlessness," Dr Robertson said. The Department of Health is advising Western Australians who have recently returned from Bali, and have developed flu-like symptoms within 10 days, to contact their GP.

"Legionnaires' disease is treated with specific antibiotics, and while most people recover, some people may develop severe pneumonia requiring hospitalisation." Legionnaires' disease most often affects middle-aged and elderly people, particularly those who smoke or who have lung disease, diabetes, kidney disease, or a weakened immune system. Legionella pneumophila is a type of bacteria commonly transmitted by the inhalation of water droplets from contaminated warm water environments such as: air conditioning cooling towers in large buildings and evaporative air conditioners; showers and warm water systems; spa pools; misting or droplet sprays, and fountains. Legionnaires' disease cannot be caught from other people or from animal contact.

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[2]

Date: Wed 19 Jan 2011

Source: Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing [edited]
<[http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/2A89C4C356B0C72CCA25781D002FE835/\\$File/JIM%20BISHOP%20-%20Legionnaires%20disease%20alert%20from%20Bali.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/2A89C4C356B0C72CCA25781D002FE835/$File/JIM%20BISHOP%20-%20Legionnaires%20disease%20alert%20from%20Bali.pdf)>

Media statement: legionnaires' disease alert to travelers from Bali

Australia's chief medical officer, Professor Jim Bishop, has issued an alert to travellers in Bali or who have recently returned, who experience 'flu-like' symptoms such as fever and cough to consult their GPs or hospital emergency departments.

"It is important that patients advise their doctor or hospital of their recent travel to Bali," Professor Bishop said. "Over recent months, Australian health authorities have been made aware of 11 cases of legionnaires' disease detected in Victorian and Western Australian residents returning from holidays in the Kuta area of Bali between August 2010 and January 2011.

Professor Bishop said Indonesian health authorities and the World Health Organization (WHO) are aware of the problem and are investigating. They have taken water samples from possible sources of outbreak for testing and have advised on appropriate disinfection and cleaning of water supply systems at the hotel and buildings in the vicinity. A number of those who contracted the disease stayed in the same hotel in Kuta (the Ramayana Resort and Spa) and most had visited the same local shopping centre.

The Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing is working with State and Territory health departments to ensure that health professionals are alert to the potential risk of contracting the disease from travel to Bali. "There are specific antibiotics available to treat the disease. The time between a person's exposure to the bacteria and becoming sick is usually between 2 to 10 days," Professor Bishop said. "People most at risk of legionnaires' disease are those over 50 years of age, smokers, and anyone whose immune system is suppressed by medication or diseases such as cancer, kidney failure, or diabetes. These people may experience more severe disease."

Legionnaires' disease may cause fever, chills, a cough and shortness of breath. Some people also have muscle aches, headache, tiredness, loss of appetite, and diarrhoea. Legionnaires' disease is not spread from person to person. The legionella bacteria occur naturally in the environment, mainly in water and soil. They are normally in very low concentrations but can increase markedly, particularly in man-made aquatic environments with warm recirculating water, such as air conditioning cooling towers. Legionnaires' Disease is acquired through breathing in very fine droplets of water that contain the bacteria, such as spray drifts which are vented from cooling towers. Whirlpool spas and warm water systems can also lead to the illness.

Further advice for travellers is available on the Smart Traveller website. Media contact: Kay McNiece, 0412 132 585

[Professor Jim Bishop AO MD MMed MBBS FRACP FRCPA Commonwealth chief medical officer, Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing]

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[Apparently 9 of the 10 confirmed cases in Australians who were linked to the same hotel while vacationing in Bali stayed at the Ramayana Resort and Spa and most also had visited the same

local shopping center, both located in the central area of Kuta, Bali. For a discussion of legionellosis see the prior ProMED-mail post Legionellosis - Australia: (WA, VI) ex Indonesia (Bali) 20110115.0173.

Kuta is a coastal town in southern Bali, Indonesia, with a long broad Indian Ocean beachfront and is one of Indonesia's major tourist destinations (<<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kuta>>). Kuta was the site of 2 Bali bombings, one in 2002 and another in 2005. A map of the island of Bali can be accessed at <http://www.baliguide.com/bali_map.html>.

Kuta on the island of Bali and the Australian states of Western Australia and Victoria can be seen on the HealthMap/ProMED-mail interactive maps at <<http://healthmap.org/r/03Jc>> and <<http://healthmap.org/r/01tN>>, respectively. - Mod.ML]