

LEGIONELLOSIS - SPAIN (03): BARCELONA

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

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<<http://www.abc.es/agencias/noticia.asp?noticia=456181>>

A total of 43 Vallgorguina residents have been affected by an outbreak of Pontiac fever, stated the mayor, Joan Mora.

To prevent the bacteria [*Legionella* species] from spreading further, the municipality has banned residents' sprinkler irrigation (systems) for a few days, because it is suspected that the source of the outbreak originated in irrigation systems located in the center of town, according to the same sources.

The outbreak of Pontiac fever was 1st detected in the primary care center of the town in early July 2010 and so far has affected 43 people in the center of Vallgorguina, none of whom had to be hospitalized at this time.

The mayor has stated that "the last 3 cases detected today [16 Jul 2010] are people who had symptoms since last Mon 12 Jul 2010," and he believes that the legionellosis outbreak is abating "because we are not recording 4 or 5 cases daily as we were last week."

According to Mora, the technicians of the Department of Health of the Government have already analyzed water from "wells, streams, fountains and irrigation systems, and all results have come out negative. We are waiting to receive the latest analysis from yesterday [15 Jul 2010] of water from a tank that is used to water the municipality flowers."

Pontiac fever is a type of very mild legionellosis, similar to a winter flu, characterized by appearance of a general malaise and joint pain.

The mayor of the municipality is sorry for the alarm that followed an anonymous letter sent by email to the media, which claimed that water from the municipal water tank was infected.

Joan Mora has said that analysis of the town drinking water has proven that it "meets all health requirements."

Communicated by: ProMED-mail <promed@promedmail.org>

[Legionellosis is an infectious disease caused by a Gram-negative bacillus of the genus *Legionella*, most commonly *Legionella pneumophila*. Legionnaires' disease is the acute pneumonic form of the disease. Pontiac fever is a non-pneumonic form of legionellosis that is less severe than Legionnaires'

disease, and develops from hours to 2 days after initial infection with fever, malaise and muscle aches. Symptoms resolve in 2 to 5 days without antibiotic treatment. Attack rates are high; up to 95 percent of exposed persons become ill. Unlike, legionnaires' diseases, there appear to be no predisposing host conditions for Pontiac fever. Pontiac fever takes its name from an outbreak in 1968 in Pontiac, Michigan.

Legionnaires' disease, and presumably Pontiac fever, is acquired by inhalation of an infectious dose of aerosolized *Legionella*. Water temperatures of 25-40 C (77-104 F) support the highest concentrations of the organism in water storage tanks of plumbing systems. Aerosolization of the contaminated warm water can occur in showers, spa pools, sprays in groceries, fountains, and cooling towers. Why some persons exposed to contaminated aerosols develop legionnaires' disease and others develop Pontiac fever is unknown.

The diagnosis of Pontiac fever is usually made on the basis of epidemiologic, clinical, serological, environmental microbiology findings, and, in a variable portion of the affected people, the development of antibodies to the bacterium isolated from the environment. However, legionella species are commonly found in the environment in the absence of illness, and legionella antibodies can be non-specific. Urinary antigen for *L. pneumophila* serogroup 1 is uncommonly positive, and cultures are rarely positive for legionella in patients with Pontiac fever. For a discussion of the pathogenesis and diagnosis of Pontiac fever, see Edelstein PH. Urinary antigen tests positive for Pontiac fever. Clin Infect Dis 2007; 44:2229-31.

Vallgorguina is a Catalan town with a population of about 2400, 50 km northeast of Barcelona (<<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vallgorguina>>).

The HealthMap/ProMED-mail interactive map of Spain can be accessed at <<http://healthmap.org/r/01Dt>>. - Mod.ML]

[see also:

Legionellosis - Spain (02): (AN) 20100708.2279 Legionellosis - Spain: (AN) 20100612.1973 Legionellosis, nosocomial - USA: (WI) 20100315.0834 Legionellosis, fatal - Germany: (BY, BW) 20100129.0314 Legionellosis - France: (AM) 20100115.0185

2006

Legionellosis - Spain (Pamplona) (03) 20060609.1611 Legionellosis - Spain (Pamplona) (02) 20060605.1565 Legionellosis - Spain (Pamplona) 20060604.1558

2005

Legionellosis - Spain (Barcelona) 20051103.3210 Legionellosis, nosocomial - Spain (Barcelona) 20050302.0646

2004

Legionellosis - Spain (Barcelona) (02) 20040820.2305 Legionellosis - Spain (Barcelona) 20040816.2271
Legionellosis, hospital - Spain (Zaragoza) (02) 20040630.1743 Legionellosis, hospital - Spain (Zaragoza)
20040621.1651

2003

Legionellosis - Spain (Valencia) 20030611.1439 Legionellosis, spa outbreak - Spain (Canary Islands) (02)
20030603.1352 Legionellosis, spa outbreak - Spain (Canary Islands) 20030530.1320

2002

Legionellosis update: 2002 (03) 20020828.5173 Legionellosis - Spain (Barcelona, Valencia)
20020812.5029

2001

Legionellosis - Spain (Murcia) (08) 20011017.2555 Legionellosis - Spain (Pamplona) (02) 20010822.1979
Legionellosis - Spain (Pamplona) 20010815.1929 Legionellosis - Spain (Murcia) 20010710.1331

2000

Legionellosis - Spain: 2000 20001209.2163 Legionellosis - Spain (Vigo, Arbizu) (02) 20001026.1860

1998

Legionellosis - Spain (Zaragoza) 19981130.2302]sb/ml/msp/dk