



Health risks associated with recreational swimming and flooding



## Leptospirosis

Leptospirosis is an infectious disease caused by bacteria that are transmitted through mud or water contaminated by the urine of infected animals.

Rats, other rodents and domestic animals transmit the infection.

Leptospirosis is usually curable if diagnosed in time and treated with medication as prescribed by a medical doctor.

## Who is at risk?

- Outdoor and agricultural workers are particularly at risk.
- Those who swim or wade in stagnant waters or slow-moving streams.
- Those who drink from stagnant waters, waterfalls, or slow moving streams.
- Zoonotic diseases such as leptospirosis, giardiasis, or sarcocystis can be caused through exposure to water and mud contaminated with the urine of infected animals like rats.



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### Prevention

Infectious diseases from water be prevented by taking the following preventative measures:

- Only consume boiled water, especially during the rainy season
- Those with cuts or open wounds should avoid muddy riverbanks and ditches where there is regular passage of wild or domestic animals
- Wear protective clothing when working with wet soil or plants
- Avoid swimming or wading in muddy ponds and slowly moving streams
- Do not touch dead animals
- Control rats and mice around the home on a regular basis



### What are the symptoms?

- Fever
- Headache
- Muscle pain
- Back pain
- Conjunctivitis (bloodshot eyes with discharge)
- Sometimes jaundice (yellow color of the eyes, mouth and skin)

### Go to a medical doctor if:

- If you have been in contact with contaminated water or mud during the rainy season, and;
- If fever develops with chills, headache and/or muscle pain

