

PUBLIC HEALTH ALERT ADVISORY ***Cluster of Legionellosis with Exposure To Communities In The Eastern Riverside County*** **March 11, 2022**

The Riverside University Health System - Public Health (RUHS-PH) provides this guidance based on current information. Updated guidance will be issued as new information becomes available.

Situation

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH), in coordination with RUHS-PH, is investigating a cluster of legionellosis cases among travelers to and residents of Palm Springs, Palm Desert, Indio and surrounding areas.

Palm Springs

As of March 2, 2022, ten patients with laboratory-confirmed Legionnaires' disease have been reported. Onset dates are estimated to range from October 31, 2021, to February 16, 2022. Case patients range in age from 44 to 86 years (median age 61.5 years). Eight of the patients were known to have been hospitalized. Two of the patients are residents of Palm Springs; the remaining eight patients are travelers who stayed at different hotels, vacation rentals, or private residences.

Palm Desert/Indio

As of March 2, 2022, ten patients with laboratory-confirmed Legionnaires' disease have been reported. Four individuals were Riverside County residents (3 Palm Springs, 1 Indio), the remaining six patients were travelers from other countries or states. Eight individuals were hospitalized with two deaths being reported. The onset of illness ranges from November 1, 2021, through February 25, 2022.

The investigation is focusing on potential common water exposures in the area.

Background

Travel associated Legionnaires' disease represents a significant cause of travel associated respiratory tract infections. Because of the propensity of this bacteria to colonize man-made water systems, Legionellosis is frequently reported in travelers who stayed in hotels or frequented public water sources e.g. (mistifiers, spas). Due to the incubation period, (2—10 days) travelers may have left the implicated area before their symptoms occurred and diagnosis was made. Optimal testing for Legionella requires both a urine antigen test and culture of lower respiratory tract specimens using appropriate media.

Actions Requested of Clinicians

- Report confirmed and suspect cases of Legionellosis to Public Health Disease Control by fax at (951) 358-5446 or through CalREDIE, if enrolled.
- Submit a lower respiratory specimen to be cultured for Legionella in patients with a travel history to Palm Springs; Palm Desert, Indio or surrounding areas, within 14 days prior to illness onset. Respiratory specimen should be frozen immediately at $\leq -20^{\circ}\text{C}$ after collection. Transport on dry ice or super cold packs. (Per CDC)
- Submit urine specimens within 48 hours of collection. Transport on cold pack.
- Send any resulting clinical isolates to the Riverside County Public Health Laboratory, who will forward the isolate to the CDPH Microbial Disease lab (MDL). Lab submittal form is located at

<https://www.rivcolab.org/Portals/17/pdf/Forms/2021/April/CLI.CSR.FRM.002%20V6%20-%20Lab%20Test%20Request%20Form%20with%20Algorithm%20Fillable%20Protected.pdf?ver=2021-04-16-132548-640×tamp=1618604760702>

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