



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
AND MENTAL HYGIENE  
Ashwin Vasani, MD, PhD  
Commissioner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## HEALTH DEPARTMENT INVESTIGATING A COMMUNITY CLUSTER OF LEGIONNAIRES' DISEASE IN THE HIGHBRIDGE NEIGHBORHOOD IN THE BRONX

*The Health Department is investigating a cluster of Legionnaires' disease cases*

*Legionnaires' disease is not contagious and is treatable when caught early*

*Adults who have been in the affected area since early May with flu-like symptoms, fever, cough, or difficulty breathing should seek immediate medical attention*

**May 20, 2022** – The Health Department today announced an investigation into a community cluster of [Legionnaires' disease](#) in the Highbridge neighborhood in the Bronx (ZIP codes 10452 and 10456) and bordering communities. Four people have been diagnosed with Legionnaires' disease since May 9, 2022, and results for other individuals are pending. To date, there have been no deaths associated with this cluster. The Health Department is actively investigating these cases and is sampling and testing water from all cooling tower systems in the area of the cluster. New Yorkers with flu-like symptoms, cough, fever or difficulty breathing should contact a physician immediately. Due to the ongoing spread of COVID-19, people seeking care should be tested for COVID-19 and evaluated for Legionnaires' disease. People get Legionnaires' disease by breathing in water vapor that contains *Legionella* bacteria. Legionnaires' disease is not contagious and can be treated with antibiotics when caught early.

“Any New Yorkers with flu-like symptoms should contact a health care provider as soon as possible,” said **Health Commissioner Dr. Ashwin Vasani**. “Legionnaires' disease can be effectively treated if diagnosed early, but New Yorkers at higher risk, like adults aged 50 and older, those who smoke or have chronic lung conditions should be especially mindful of their symptoms and seek care as soon as symptoms begin.”

Legionnaires' disease is a type of pneumonia that is caused by the bacteria *Legionella*, which grows in warm water. Symptoms resemble other types of pneumonia and can include fever, chills, muscle aches, and cough. Most cases of Legionnaires' disease can be traced to plumbing systems where conditions are favorable for *Legionella* growth, such as cooling towers, whirlpool spas, hot tubs, humidifiers, hot water tanks, and evaporative condensers of large air-conditioning systems.

Individuals only get sick by breathing in water vapor containing *Legionella* bacteria, and the disease is not transmitted from person to person. Individuals at higher risk include those ages 50

and above, cigarette smokers, and people with chronic lung disease or compromised immune systems. People living or working in the area who are experiencing these symptoms should seek medical attention with a primary care provider or seek urgent care.

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**MEDIA CONTACT:** Patrick Gallahue / Michael Lanza,  
[PressOffice@health.nyc.gov](mailto:PressOffice@health.nyc.gov)