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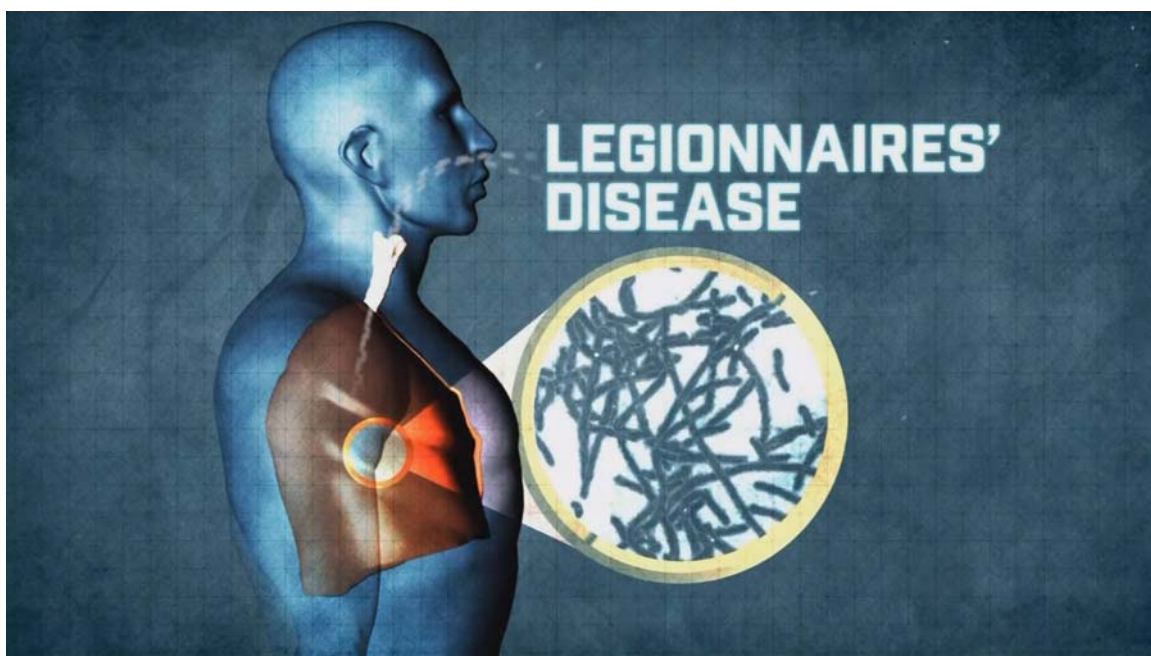
FOR AGRICULTURAL HEALTH, INJURY PREVENTION, AND EDUCATION

## Monthly Safety Blast

*Produced by the Southwest Center for Agricultural Health, Injury Prevention and Education*

**November 2019**

### Legionnaires' Disease



On November 1, 2019, the Northeast Texas Public Health District announced that seven confirmed cases and five possible cases of Legionnaires' disease have been identified in the Northeast Texas region. The full press release can be accessed at <https://www.mynethealth.org/uploads/cms/nav-178-5dbba04f6e2a5.pdf>.

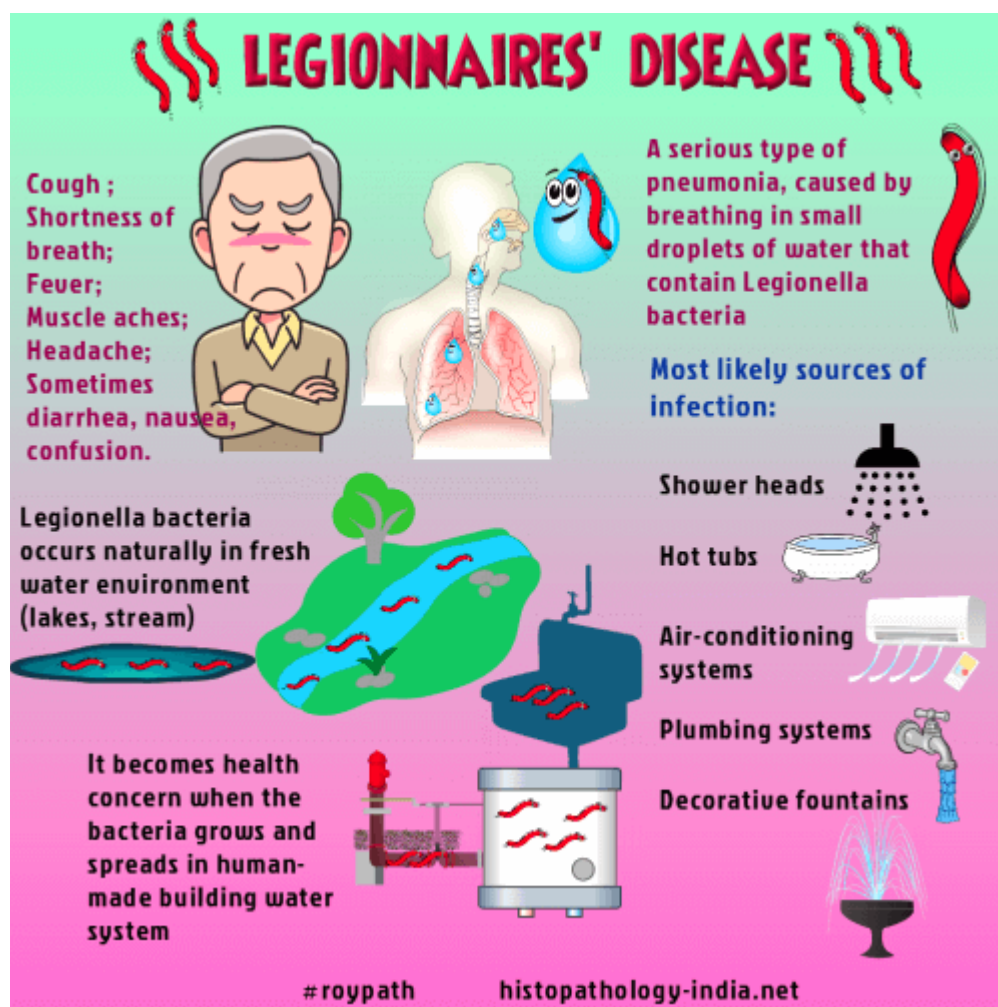
If you are like me, your first question is, "What is Legionnaires' Disease?" According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Legionella is a type of bacterium found in freshwater, like streams and lakes. It becomes a health concern when the bacteria spreads into water sources that are used by humans. This could include shower heads, faucets, cooling towers, hot tubs, fountains, water heaters and large plumbing systems. Most cases are caused by people breathing in small droplets of water in the air that contain the bacteria.

Legionnaires' Disease is pneumonia caused by Legionella bacteria and the symptoms are similar to other types of pneumonia, including:

- cough
- shortness of breath
- fever
- muscle aches
- headache

People at highest risk include those older than 50 years of age, current or former smokers and anyone with a chronic lung disease or a weakened immune system. The legionella bacterium also causes Pontiac fever, a milder illness with flu-like symptoms. Pontiac fever usually clears on its own, but untreated Legionnaires' disease can be fatal.

For the visual learners, the information provided in this article is summarized in the infographic below. You can also learn more by visiting the links in the references section.



#### References:

- <https://www.mynethealth.org/index.php>
- <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/legionnaires-disease/symptoms-causes/syc-20351747>
- <https://www.webmd.com/lung/what-is-legionnaires-disease#1>

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