



HEALTH ADVISORY #52

TESTING FOR LEGIONNAIRES' DISEASE (LEGIONELLOSIS)

TO: West Virginia Healthcare Providers, Hospitals, and Local Health Departments

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West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, Bureau for Public Health

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LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS: PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO COMMUNITY HEALTH PROVIDERS, HOSPITAL-BASED PHYSICIANS, INFECTION PREVENTIONISTS, LABORATORY DIRECTORS, AND OTHER APPLICABLE PARTNERS

OTHER RECIPIENTS: PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO APPLICABLE MEMBERS, STAFF, ETC.

Several cases of Legionnaires' disease have been under investigation in the Northern Panhandle.

Please be certain to investigate and report to your local health department all suspected cases of Legionella pneumonia with a history of travel through or stay in the Northern Panhandle (Hancock, Brooke, Marshall, and Ohio Counties). Guidance on diagnosis and testing includes the following:

- Clinical features of Legionnaires' disease generally include radiographic pneumonia with cough, fever, and chest pain; hospitalization is common. More information can be found at: <http://www.cdc.gov/legionella/top10.htm>
- Urinary antigen assay AND culture of respiratory secretions on selective media are the preferred diagnostic tests for Legionnaires' disease.
- Respiratory secretions (sputum or bronchoalveolar lavage) should be collected before starting antimicrobial therapy from all suspected cases of Legionnaires' disease. Samples from individuals with positive urine antigen for Legionella and history of travel to the Northern Panhandle should be sent to the West Virginia Office of Laboratory Services for further testing at CDC.

Local health department staff should investigate all possible cases of Legionnaires' disease thoroughly, including eliciting a travel history during the 2–14 days prior to symptom onset. Alert DIDE immediately if a case is found with travel history to the Northern Panhandle.

Please contact WVBPH, Infectious Disease Epidemiology at 1-800-423-1271 (in WV) or 304-558-5358 for questions.

This message was directly distributed by the West Virginia Bureau for Public Health to local health departments and professional associations. Receiving entities are responsible for further disseminating the information to the targeted audiences noted.

Categories of Health Alert messages:

Health Alert: Conveys the highest level of importance, warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: Provides important information for a specific incident or situation. May not require immediate action.

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