

# Legionellosis

Legionnaires' disease, *Legionella pneumonia*

**Legionellosis**, or Legionnaires' disease, is an infection caused by *Legionella* bacteria. Legionnaires' disease is a serious lung infection, or pneumonia. Certain people are more likely to be affected by legionellosis, including people over the age of 50, those who have weakened immune systems and current or former smokers.

## Symptoms and Treatment

### Common symptoms

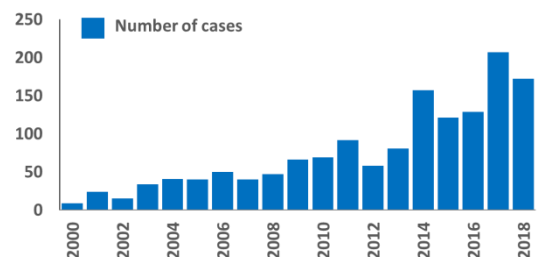
- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Muscle aches
- Headache
- Confusion
- Loss of appetite
- Diarrhea (occasionally)

### Treatment

- Legionnaires' disease requires treatment with antibiotics.
- Many people who get Legionnaires' disease need care in a hospital, but fully recover from their illness.

## What about Tennessee?

- TN has seen a general increase in reported cases of legionellosis.
- The highest number of cases ever recorded was in 2017.



## How is it spread?



*Legionella* bacteria live in water and can be found in natural and human-made water sources.



The bacteria grow best in warm water and can grow to high numbers if water systems are not properly maintained.



People can get sick when they breathe in water droplets that contain the bacteria. In general, legionellosis cannot be spread from person to person.



### Common sources of infection

include water used for showering, decorative fountains, hot tubs, and cooling towers.

Most of the time, only single cases of legionellosis illness are identified, but large outbreaks have occurred. Outbreaks of legionellosis are often linked to buildings with large or complex water systems, like hospitals and hotels.

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