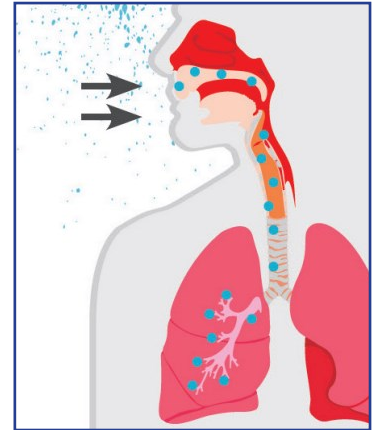


Legionella in your Home

What is *Legionella*?

Legionella is a bacteria that can cause a serious type of pneumonia called Legionnaires' disease and a less serious illness called Pontiac fever. The bacteria are found naturally in freshwater environments but become a health concern when they are able to grow and multiply in man-made water systems.



<https://www.cdc.gov/legionella/downloads/fs-legionnaires.pdf>

Legionella Growth

A variety of factors can lead to *Legionella* growth within water systems, including:

- Construction
- Water main breaks
- Changes in municipal water quality
- Biofilm
- Scale and sediment
- Water temperature fluctuations
- pH fluctuations
- Inadequate levels of disinfectant
- Changes in water pressure
- Water stagnation

Legionella growth is most favorable in conditions where water temperatures are between 77-113°F and disinfectant levels are low.

Legionnaires' Disease

Legionnaires' disease is spread by water droplets in the air that contain *Legionella* bacteria. People may become sick if they breathe in the water droplets containing the bacteria. **Points of exposure may include shower heads and sink faucets, hot tubs, and decorative fountains/water features.**

If your home water system tests positive for *Legionella* and you or a house member is experiencing symptoms similar to pneumonia, please notify your health care provider about the possibility of being exposed to *Legionella*.

Prevention

A great way to prevent *Legionella* growth is to maintain and monitor your water system. Water quality parameters such as temperature, pH, and disinfectant residual (e.g. chlorine levels) can indicate a problem that may exist within your system.

Monitor for patterns and trends within your water parameters and consider flushing low-use areas by running the cold water taps for 5 minutes and running the hot water taps for 15 minutes.

Treatment

If you believe a problem exists within your water system, you may consider testing your water for *Legionella*, installing point-of-use filters that filter out *Legionella* bacteria, and/or hiring a water consultant to offer guidance on treatment options for your system.

For more information on preventing waterborne germs at home, please visit:

<https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/drinking/preventing-waterborne-germs-at-home.html>