

Legionellosis

Merlin reporting code = 48280
 Case report form (CRF): [Legionellosis CRF](#)
MERLIN EXTENDED DATA REQUIRED

Clinical description

Legionellosis is associated with two clinically and epidemiologically distinct illnesses: Legionnaires disease, which is characterized by fever, myalgia, cough, and clinical or radiographic pneumonia, and Pontiac fever, a milder illness without pneumonia.

Laboratory criteria for case classification

Confirmatory:

- Isolation of any *Legionella* organism from respiratory secretions, lung tissue, pleural fluid, or other normally sterile fluid,
- OR
- Detection of *Legionella pneumophila* serogroup 1 antigen in urine using validated reagents,
- OR
- Fourfold or greater rise in specific serum antibody titer to *Legionella pneumophila* serogroup 1 using validated reagents.

Supportive:

- Fourfold or greater rise in antibody titer to specific species or serogroups of *Legionella* other than *L. pneumophila* serogroup 1 (e.g., *L. micdadei*, *L. pneumophila* serogroup 6);
- OR
- Fourfold or greater rise in antibody titer to multiple species of *Legionella* using pooled antigen and validated reagents;
- OR
- Detection of specific *Legionella* antigen or staining of the organism in respiratory secretions, lung tissue, or pleural fluid by direct fluorescent antibody (DFA) staining, immunohistochemistry (IHC), or other similar method, using validated reagents;
- OR
- Detection of *Legionella* species by a validated nucleic acid assay.

Case classification

Confirmed:

A clinically compatible illness in a person with confirmatory laboratory evidence.

Suspect:

A clinically compatible illness in a person with supportive laboratory evidence.

Comments

The previously used category of “probable case,” which was based on a single IFA titer, lacks specificity for surveillance and is no longer used.

Travel-associated: A case that has a history of spending at least one night away from home, either in the same country of residence or abroad, in the two weeks before onset of illness. **Indicate if the case is travel-associated in the case notes.**

[Return to Table of Contents](#)