

# MLS Laboratory Update:

JULY 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2023

## Purpose of this Message: Heightened Surveillance for Legionnaire's Disease

To inform MLS Laboratories that the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) is investigating a cluster of 5 confirmed cases of Legionnaires' disease cases. This message is also to remind laboratorians that, if a patient tests positive using a *Legionella* urinary antigen test (UAT), to please submit respiratory specimens (see details below) to MDH-PHL for testing and characterization.

### Action Items:

1. Please submit available residual lower respiratory tract specimens from patients with positive *Legionella* urinary antigen tests (UAT) or positive *Legionella* PCR tests to MDH-PHL.
2. Use "Project 2126" on the [MDH-PHL General Infectious Disease Laboratory Submission Form \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/idlab/forms.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/idlab/forms.html) when submitting lower respiratory tract specimens for *Legionella* culture.
3. Please forward or share this message with lab sections/benches (such as chemistry) that perform *Legionella* UAT.

### Background:

MDH has detected a cluster of five laboratory-confirmed Legionnaires' disease cases in adult persons who reported spending time in Grand Rapids, MN during the two weeks prior to their onset of illness; onsets of illness occurred between April and mid-July 2023. Investigation into the source of this cluster is ongoing. MDH encourages *Legionella* testing in patients with possible Legionnaires' disease who may be connected to this cluster.

#### Health Care Providers:

- Consider Legionnaires' disease for patients:
  - with pneumonia (clinical symptoms may include fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, headache, muscle aches, fatigue, weakness, loss of appetite, confusion, nausea, and diarrhea)
  - who also live, work, or have visited Grand Rapids, Minnesota within two weeks prior to their onset of illness.
- Test patients with clinically compatible illnesses who may be connected to this cluster with the *Legionella* urinary antigen test. Save any available sputum or other lower respiratory specimens from confirmed or suspect Legionnaires' disease cases for

possible submission to the MDH Public Health Laboratory. Serology is NOT recommended for diagnosis of Legionnaires' disease.

- Contact MDH at 651-201-5414 (1-877-676-5414) for consultation. This on-call number is available to health professionals 24/7.
- Report all cases of Legionnaires' disease: [Reporting Legionellosis \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/legionellosis/report.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/legionellosis/report.html)

## Additional Information:

- MLS Laboratory Update: June 21, 2022: [Requesting Residual Lower Respiratory Tract Specimens for Confirmed or Suspected Legionnaires' Disease Cases \(PDF\)](#)
- [MDH: Legionellosis \(\*Legionella\*\) Information for Health Professionals \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/legionellosis/hcp.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/legionellosis/hcp.html)
- [CDC: Legionella Information for Clinicians \(https://www.cdc.gov/legionella/clinicians.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/legionella/clinicians.html)

**Questions:** Please contact: Paula Vagnone: [paula.snippes@state.mn.us](mailto:paula.snippes@state.mn.us)

Thank you for your assistance!

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*THE CONTENT OF THIS MESSAGE IS INTENDED FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE PERSONNEL AND RESPONSE PARTNERS WHO HAVE A NEED TO KNOW THE INFORMATION TO PERFORM THEIR DUTIES. IT IS FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY. DO NOT DISTRIBUTE BEYOND THE INTENDED RECIPIENT GROUPS AS DESCRIBED IN THIS MESSAGE.*

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*To obtain this information in a different format, call: 651-201-5200.*