

GP Alert for Legionnaires' Disease

The Communicable Disease Prevention and Control Unit (CDP&CU) has been notified of three cases of Legionnaires' disease that have all had a common exposure in the Werribee area.

It is important to consider Legionnaires' disease in patients presenting with influenza-like symptoms such as headache, fever, rigors, cough, myalgia and particularly in those with pneumonia or dyspnoea.

Rapid confirmation within 24 hours of the diagnosis can be obtained by urinary antigen testing. Sputum for culture should be sought in all cases. A four-fold rise in titre between acute and convalescent sera, or a single high titre of 512 in a convalescent serum sample is also diagnostic. However, a rise in titre may take 2 to 4 weeks to develop.

Legionnaires' disease is a notifiable condition and must be reported to CDCU within 24 hours.

For further information or to notify a case please contact the Communicable Disease Prevention and Control Unit at the Department of Human Services on 1300 651 160.

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Chief Health Officer