

See a doctor:

Leptospirosis can start with high fever and flu-like symptoms. See a doctor if you develop a high fever as early diagnosis and treatment can help prevent serious illness. Tell your doctor that your work may bring you into contact with cattle, pigs or rats.



Symptoms can include:

- high fever
- headaches
- chills and sweating
- severe muscle pain (particularly calves and thighs)
- bloodshot eyes
- vomiting



People with leptospirosis often have to spend time in hospital. In rare cases, leptospirosis may be fatal. Pregnant women and people with certain medical conditions or who have a weakened immune system may be at increased risk.

For more information, talk to your GP or contact your local Public Health Unit
<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/system-governance/contact-us/contact/public-health-units>

Image credits

1 Rat Russia, Moscow - Sergey Yellseev, 2 Tim Abbott - Banana
3 Rug & Rock - Rafting down the Ahansal river, 4 USDA - Migrant farm worker
5 Matt JP - Boots, 6 Scot Nelson - Lightning injury to banana plants at a farm near Hilo, Hawaii
7 Scot Nelson - Rats feeding injury to plants and crops in Hawaii

Don't let lepto get under your skin



**Lepto can put you in hospital
and off work for weeks**



Are you at risk?



Leptospirosis is spread through infected animal urine. Cattle, pigs and rodents are the most common source of the bacteria. People usually become infected when contaminated water or soil gets into sores or cuts on their skin or into their mouth, nose or eyes.

3 Rip & Rock

Take precautions if you:

- work with cattle, pigs or rodents
- are a farm worker or gardener
- are camping, bushwalking or doing water sports
- are working where there may be rats or mice.

Leptospirosis is particularly common in tropical areas during the wet season (December to May).



4 USDA

“I thought you’d have to be unlucky or have a decent cut to get lepto.” 34-year-old Tully banana worker – hospitalised for one month with leptospirosis.



5 Matt JP

Wear boots in moist / muddy soil and puddles.



6 Scott Nelson

Cut long grass. It attracts rodents.



7 Scott Nelson

Wear gloves to touch rodents and nests or sites where rodents have been.

How to avoid lepto:

COVER

Cover up with boots and gloves if in contact with soil, mud, dirty water, rodents, or sites where rodents have been. Wear safety eyewear if your eyes could be splashed. Cover cuts and sores with waterproof dressings. Tape may help to keep dressings on and keep water out.



WASH

Wash hands with soap and water before eating and smoking, after contact with soil, mud, dirty water or plants, after removing personal protective equipment and after handling or working around animals.

Shower after being on the farm or going to the bush.



CLEAN UP

Clean up rubbish, long grass, food scraps and junk to keep rodents away. Keep work areas clean, dry and well-drained as the leptospirosis bacteria survive in wet conditions.

