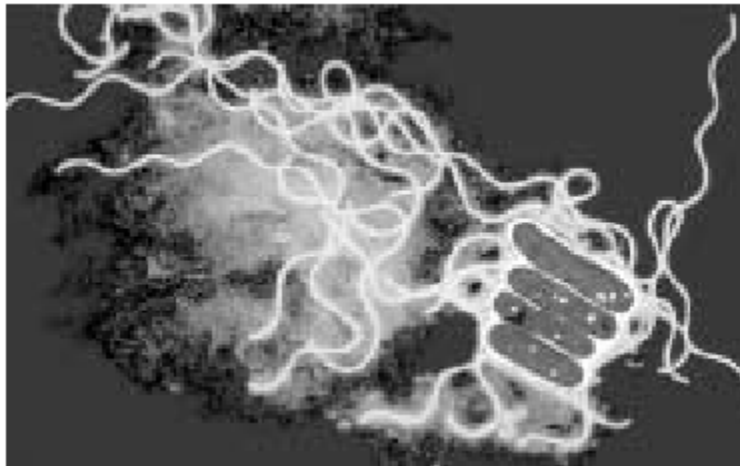


Legionnaires' Disease in Hospitals

Hospital acquired Legionnaires' disease usually originates in hospital water systems. Legionella not only persists in hot water tanks, it is often found in the biofilm through the entire water system.



Legionnaires' Disease in Hospitals

Hospital-acquired Legionnaires' disease usually originates in hospital water systems. Legionella not only persists in hot water tanks, it is often found in the biofilm through the entire water system. Conditions within water systems that promote Legionella colonisation include water temperature, configuration and age of the hot water tank, and plumbing materials.

An estimated 10 to 15 thousand people contract Legionnaires' disease in the US each year; 5 to 15% of these cases prove to be fatal. An additional unknown number are infected with Legionella bacterium and have mild symptoms or no illness at all. Additionally, Legionellosis is frequently misdiagnosed as common pneumonia.

The occurrence of Legionnaires disease, and subsequent fatality rates, caused by nosocomial Legionellosis are much higher in hospitals & healthcare facilities than are observed elsewhere. In many parts of the world there is strong legislation to ensure that this entirely avoidable disease is prevented from coming into contact with high-risk members of the population.

In the US the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) recommends a Risk Minimization Plan for all healthcare facilities "to reduce the potential for organisational-acquired illness including managing pathogenic biological agents in cooling towers, domestic hot water, and other aerosolising water systems. The UK's Health and Safety Commission (HSC) also produce excellent guidance on the control and management of Legionella risks in their L8 Document.

The risk of hospital-acquired Legionnaires' disease can be minimised by control measures directed at the water distribution system.

Additional Information & Expert Assistance

For further information and expert assistance please contact:

Legionella Control International
Quay West
Trafford Wharf Road
Manchester M17 1HH
United Kingdom

Telephone: +44 (0) 161 240 2245

E-mail: info@legionellacontrol.com.