



RAPID RISK ASSESSMENT

Outbreak of Legionnaires' disease in a hotel in Calpe, Spain November 2011 – June 2012

Update, 11 July 2012

Main conclusions and recommendations

This is a further update of the risk assessment of 4 July 2012; it is in response to new information regarding the risk associated with an outbreak of Legionnaires' disease in a hotel in Calpe, in the province of Alicante, Spain.

New environmental investigations carried out in the hotel by regional public authorities, together with an external expert engaged by the hotel, identified the spa pool as the probable source of the outbreak. This conclusion is in line with the ECDC expert mission that joined the investigations team on Friday, 6 July. As the spa pool will be rebuilt and old pipes replaced, the intermittent source of contamination seems to be stopped and herewith also the risk for further extension of the outbreak. The hotel will remain closed until the Spanish health authorities will approve the reopening of the hotel.

Link to the previous rapid risk assessments

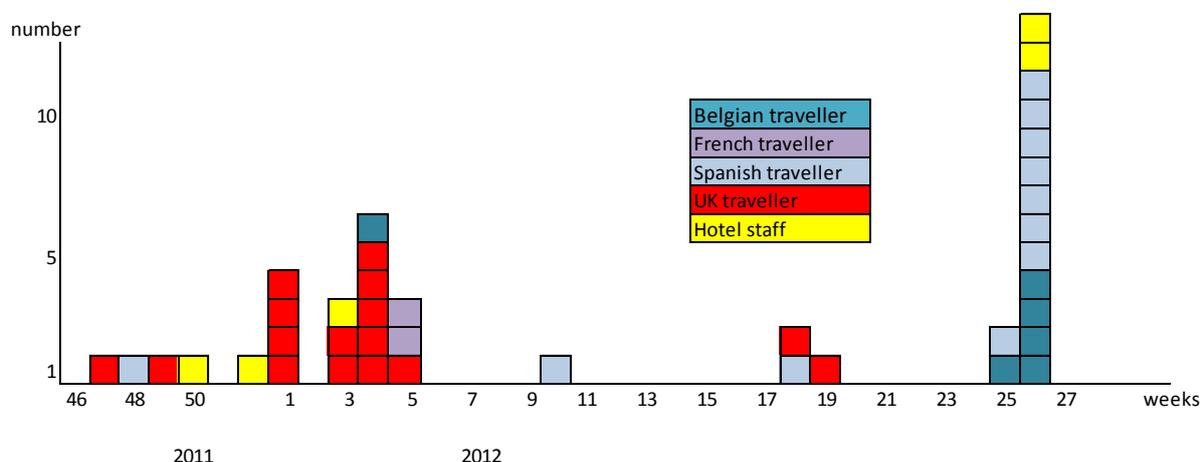
- Rapid risk assessment: Outbreak of Legionnaires' disease in a hotel in Calpe, Spain, November 2011–January 2012, 6 February 2012.
http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/1202_TER_Legionnaires_cluster_Spain.pdf
- Updated rapid risk assessment: Outbreak of Legionnaires' disease in a hotel in Calpe, Spain, November 2011–May 2012, 24 May 2012.
<http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/1205-TER-Updated-Risk-assessment-Legionnaires-Spain.pdf>
- Updated risk assessment: Outbreak of Legionnaires' disease in a hotel in Calpe, Spain, November 2011–May 2012, 4 June 2012.
<http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/1206-TER-Updated-Risk-assessment-Legionnaires-Spain.pdf>
- Updated risk assessment: Outbreak of Legionnaires' disease in a hotel in Calpe, Spain, November 2011–July 2012, 4 July 2012.
<http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/060712-RRA-outbreak-Legionnaires-disease.pdf>

Updated event background information

Following the first notification of new cases in late June and the closure of the hotel, new environmental investigations were carried out from 3 to 5 July 2012 in the hotel by regional public health authorities, together with an external expert engaged by the hotel management.

These investigations revealed that construction aspects of the spa pool might have been at the origin of the water contamination. The hotel, which is currently closed, is taking extensive measures to prevent further cases, including rebuilding the spa pool. Visiting ECDC experts and an observer who joined the investigation team on 6 July, assessed the risk on site on the basis of results of all environmental, epidemiological and laboratory investigations carried out by the regional public health authorities and an external expert.

Figure: Travel-associated Legionnaires' disease in Calpe, Spain; number of cases by week of disease onset



ECDC threat assessment for the EU

Strong evidence has been found, indicating the spa pool was the probable source of infection. As stated in the rapid risk assessment of 4 July 2012, the hotel was closed on 2 July, and guests relocated on 3 July. The hotel will remain closed until Spanish health authorities will approve the reopening of the hotel. A rapid communication is in process and will be made publicly available. Further laboratory results are awaited to confirm that the source of water contamination has indeed been found. If this is indeed the case, the risk of further infection is considered to return to the baseline level.

Conclusion

As strong evidence points to the spa pool as the source of infection, and the spa pool will now be rebuilt, the outbreak can be considered to be contained.

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