

What is Pontiac fever?

Pontiac fever is a mild form of Legionnaires' disease that often causes a flu-like illness.

What are the symptoms of Pontiac fever?

Persons with Pontiac fever usually have fever, chills, cough, body aches, headache, tiredness, loss of appetite, and occasionally diarrhea.

How soon do symptoms appear?

The time between the patient's exposure to the bacterium and the onset of illness generally ranges from a few hours to 2 days.

How is Pontiac fever spread?

Outbreaks of Pontiac fever have occurred after persons have inhaled the fine spray (aerosols) that come from a contaminated water source (e.g., air conditioning cooling towers, spas, showers). Persons may be exposed to these aerosols in homes, workplaces, hospitals, or public places.

Who gets Pontiac fever?

Persons of any age can get Pontiac fever. It occurs most commonly in persons who are healthy.

Can Pontiac fever spread from person to person?

You cannot get Pontiac fever from another person.

What is the treatment for Pontiac fever?

Pontiac fever is usually not treated with antibiotics and usually requires no specific treatment. People recover without treatment.

Do infected people need to be excluded from school, work, or child care?

No.

What can be done to help prevent Pontiac fever?

Improved design and maintenance of cooling towers and plumbing systems to limit the growth and spray of *Legionella* organisms are the keys to Pontiac fever prevention. During outbreaks, health department investigators seek the source of the disease and recommend appropriate prevention and control measures, such as cleaning the water source.