

Legionnaires' Disease is recognized as an acute respiratory pneumonia caused by the aerobic gram-negative microorganism, Legionella pneumophila, and other species. This microorganism may also affect other body systems. Afflicted patients may have pulmonary (lung and bronchi), gastrointestinal tract, and central nervous system complications. Renal insufficiency may occur occasionally and can be severe enough to require dialysis. The primary symptoms associated with Legionnaires' Disease appear to be pneumonia including a shaking chill, sharp pain in the involved side of the chest, cough with sputum or phlegm production, fever of up to 105° F, and, in some cases, rapid and painful respiration. Abdominal pain, diarrhea, neurological signs such as headache, confusion, lethargy or agitation may also be present. Laboratory data may include an abnormal liver function test, low phosphorus in the blood (hypophosphatemia), blood in the urine (hematuria), and low blood sodium (hyponatremia). Like Legionnaires' Disease, Pontiac Fever is caused by infection with bacteria belonging to the Legionella family. Associated symptoms usually include a general feeling of ill health (malaise), fatigue, fever, chills, muscle aches (myalgia), and headache. Some individuals with Pontiac Fever may also develop nausea, cough, joint aches (arthralgia), diarrhea, and abdominal pain. The pneumonia seen in Legionnaires' Disease is not present. Affected individuals usually recover without treatment (self-limiting illness) in a few days. In those who develop Pontiac Fever, the time between initial infection and symptom onset (incubation period) is typically about one to two days. In contrast, the incubation period for Legionnaires' Disease usually ranges from approximately two to 10 days.