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Leptospirosis (Leptospira interrogans) 2025 Case Definition | CDC  
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Leptospirosis (  
Leptospira interrogans  
)  
2025 Case Definition  
Leptospirosis (  
Leptospira interrogans  
)  
2025 Case Definition  
NOTE:  
A surveillance case definition is a set of uniform criteria used to define a disease for public health surveillance. Surveillance case definitions enable public health officials to classify and count cases consistently across reporting jurisdictions. Surveillance case definitions are not intended to be used by healthcare providers for making a clinical diagnosis or determining how to meet an individual patient’s health needs.  
CSTE Position Statement(s)  
24-ID-07  
Background  
Leptospirosis is a zoonotic disease identified globally, with most cases occurring in tropical climates. Human infection may occur following direct contact with urine or other body fluids from an infected animal, or indirectly through contact with contaminated water, soil, or food.  
Leptospira  
bacteria may enter the body through mucous membranes or abraded skin.  
1, 2  
Clinical Criteria  
An illness characterized by one or more of the following: fever, headache, chills, myalgia, vomiting, nausea, diarrhea, abdominal pain, conjunctival suffusion, renal insufficiency, jaundice, respiratory insufficiency, meningitis, or rash. Symptoms may be biphasic.  
Laboratory Criteria  
Confirmatory Laboratory Evidence:  
Isolation of  
Leptospira  
from a clinical specimen,  
OR  
Fourfold or greater increase in  
Leptospira  
agglutination titer between acute and convalescent phase serum specimens studied at the same laboratory,  
OR  
Demonstration of  
Leptospira  
in tissue by direct immunofluorescence,  
OR  
Leptospira  
agglutination titer of ≥800 by Microscopic Agglutination Test (MAT) in one or more serum specimens,  
OR  
Detection of pathogenic (P1 clade) or intermediate (P2 clade)  
Leptospira  
DNA (e.g., by PCR) from a clinical specimen.  
Presumptive Laboratory Evidence:  
Leptospira  
agglutination titer of ≥200 but < 800 by Microscopic Agglutination Test (MAT) in one or more serum specimens,  
OR  
Demonstration of anti-  
Leptospira  
antibodies in a clinical specimen by indirect immunofluorescence,  
OR  
Demonstration of  
Leptospira  
in a clinical specimen by darkfield microscopy,  
OR  
Detection of IgM antibodies against  
Leptospira  
in an acute phase serum specimen.  
Note: The categorical labels used here to stratify laboratory evidence are intended to support the standardization of case classifications for public health surveillance. The categorical labels should not be used to interpret the utility or validity of any laboratory test methodology.  
Epidemiologic Linkage  
Involvement in an exposure event (e.g., adventure race, triathlon, flooding, occupational exposure) with associated laboratory-confirmed cases of leptospirosis.  
Criteria to Distinguish a New Case from an Existing Case  
A new case should be enumerated when:  
A person previously enumerated as a probable or confirmed case with new onset of symptoms that meets the criteria for a confirmed or probable case, after consultation with CDC leptospirosis SMEs.  
Case Classification  
Probable  
Meets clinical criteria  
AND  
meets presumptive laboratory evidence,  
OR  
Meets clinical criteria  
AND  
meets epidemiologic linkage criteria.  
Confirmed  
Meets confirmatory laboratory evidence.  
References  
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Related Case Definition(s)  
Leptospirosis (  
Leptospira interrogans  
) | 2013 Case Definition  
Leptospirosis (  
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) | 1997 Case Definition  
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NNDSS receives and shares case data from state, local, and territorial health departments to help public health monitor, control, and prevent serious diseases.  
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