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Waterborne Disease Outbreak  
1990 Case Definition  
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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.  
Background  
Definition: An incident in which two or more persons experience a similar illness after consumption or use of water intended for drinking, and epidemiologic evidence implicates the water as the source of the illness.  
Clinical Description  
Symptoms of illness depend upon etiologic agent.  
Laboratory Criteria For Diagnosis  
Depends upon etiologic agent.  
Comments  
In addition, a single case of chemical poisoning constitutes an outbreak if laboratory studies indicate that the water has been contaminated by the chemical. Other outbreaks that should be reported include a) epidemiologic investigations of outbreaks of gastroenteritis (even if not waterborne) on ocean-going passenger vessels that call on U.S. ports, and b) outbreaks of illness associated with exposure to recreational water. Disease outbreaks associated with water used for recreational purposes should meet the same criteria used for waterborne outbreaks associated with drinking water. However, outbreaks associated with recreational water involve exposure to or unintentional ingestion of fresh or marine water, excluding wound infections caused by water-related organisms.  
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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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