

Environmental Hazard Information



The Hautbois Team does all it can to minimize the risk of accidents and incidents whilst on site.

Environmental hazards are assessed, and suitable measures put in place to ensure all of our site users enjoy their visit to Hautbois as safely as possible by taking a few simple precautions.

(Copies of risk assessments and procedures are available on request).

Information and advice is taken directly from the HSE website and procedures are reviewed annually to remain current and up to date.

This list is not exhaustive of potential environmental hazards but covers the basic preventatives outlined in the Hautbois Risk assessments and safe operating procedures.

If you have any questions regarding any of our potential environmental hazards please feel free to contact the office. admin@hautbois.org.uk or phone 01603 737357 #2

Leptospirosis (Weil's Disease and Hardjo)

Background Information

Leptospirosis is a zoonotic infection found worldwide, of which there are two forms: Weil's disease and Hardjo. Weil's disease is a potentially serious bacterial infection. It is most commonly acquired from water contaminated with rat urine and is therefore often associated with outdoor water activities. Hardjo is similar to Weil's disease, although usually less serious. It is generally caught from infected cattle.

Organism

Leptospira species

Incidence and Transmission

There are around 50 cases of Leptospirosis each year in the UK, although some of these are acquired abroad.

Weil's disease is spread via direct or indirect contact with rat urine, often via contaminated water.

Hardjo is spread from cattle to humans. Infected cattle spread the disease via bacteria in their urine.

The bacteria enter through cuts or abrasions in skin or through the mucous membranes of the nose, mouth and eyes.

Leptospirosis infections are not generally spread from person to person.

Occupations and processes where Weil's disease may present a risk

Occupational exposure may occur in those who:

- are in contact with water contaminated with rat urine;
- are in contact with other materials contaminated with rat urine; or
- are in contact with rats.

Occupations where there may be a risk of occupationally acquired Weil's disease include:

- watersports instructors;
- workers in outdoor leisure industries, particularly if in contact with water;
- sewage and waste water workers;
- divers;
- construction/demolition/building renovation workers – where there are rodents or stagnant water;

- farm workers; and
- pest control workers.

Occupations and processes where Hardjo may present a risk

Occupational exposure may occur in those who:

- are in contact with infected cattle – particularly being splashed with urine; or
- work with materials or products from infected cattle.

Occupations where there may be a risk of occupationally acquired Hardjo include:

- cattle and dairy farmers – particularly urine splash during milking;
- veterinary surgeons; and
- abattoir workers, meat processing plant workers and butchers.

Clinical Information

The incubation period is generally 7–21 days (may be 2–30 days).

Some cases are asymptomatic or have mild flu-like symptoms. In more severe cases symptoms include fever, severe headache, muscle pain and vomiting, and may lead to jaundice, meningitis and kidney failure. The disease can be fatal.

Anyone with flu-like symptoms who may have been in contact with rat urine or with cattle or their products should seek medical attention. Antibiotic treatment should be started as soon as possible.

Control

The following control measures reduce the risk of infection:

- Cattle herds may be vaccinated against *Leptospira* infections, although this does not totally eliminate the risk of infection.
- The rat population should be effectively controlled.
- Cuts and abrasions should be covered with waterproof dressings.
- Good occupational hygiene practices should be followed, especially washing with warm water and soap.
- Suitable protective gloves should be worn when handling rats (dead or alive).
- Suitable protective clothing should be worn when working with cattle or cattle products, eg gloves and waterproof overalls where there is a risk of urine splash.
- A suitable disinfectant should be used.
- If involved in watersports, full immersion in lake water should be avoided where possible.

- Always shower after watersports, especially if you fall in.

Further Information

[HSE – Leptospirosis information](#)

[Public Health England – Leptospirosis](#)

[NHS Choices – Leptospirosis](#)

Cryptosporidiosis

Background Information

Cryptosporidiosis is an infectious diarrhoeal disease caused by a waterborne protozoan parasite. It is a disease of humans and animals, including cattle and sheep.

Organism

Cryptosporidium parvum

Incidence and Transmission

Cryptosporidiosis cases have been declining in the UK for many years, but there are still around 4000 recorded cases each year in England and Wales.

Cryptosporidium most commonly affects young children and the immunocompromised, but can affect anyone.

Cryptosporidium is found in the gut of man and animals (particularly cattle and sheep). It is also found in water contaminated with faeces.

It can be transmitted via contact with infected animals, by drinking or swimming in contaminated water and by eating contaminated food, eg salad vegetables. It can be spread from person to person where there is poor hygiene.

Occupations and processes where *Cryptosporidium* may present a risk

Occupational exposure to *Cryptosporidium* may occur in those who:

- are in contact with infected animals, particularly calves and lambs, or humans;
- are in contact with materials from infected animals, particularly faeces; or
- are in contact with water contaminated with animal faeces.

Occupations where there may be a risk of occupationally acquired cryptosporidiosis include:

- farm workers;
- abattoir workers, meat processing plant workers and butchers;
- veterinary surgeons;
- workers in outdoor leisure industries in contact with water, eg watersports instructors;
- sewage and waste water workers;
- construction/demolition/building renovation workers – where there is stagnant water; and

- healthcare and care workers;

Clinical Information

The incubation period is 2–10 days (average 7 days). The main symptom is watery diarrhoea, but symptoms can also include fever, stomach cramps and vomiting. Anyone with severe symptoms should seek medical attention. There is no treatment apart from rehydration therapy and most people recover within one month.

Control

The following control measures reduce the risk of infection:

- Good occupational hygiene practices should be followed, especially washing with warm water and soap.
- Cuts and abrasions should be covered with waterproof plasters.
- Suitable protective clothing should be worn.
- A suitable disinfectant should be used – the parasite is resistant to most common disinfectants.

Further Information

[Public Health England – Cryptosporidium](#)

Lyme Disease

Background Information

Lyme disease (also known as Lyme borreliosis) is a potentially serious bacterial infection transmitted via tick bites. It does occur in the UK, particularly in certain rural areas.

Organism

Borrelia burgdorferi

Incidence and Transmission

There are around 900 reported cases of Lyme disease in the UK each year, although estimates suggest there may actually be 2000–3000 cases. Some of these cases are acquired abroad.

Lyme disease is spread by tick bites. The ticks feed on birds and mammals that carry the bacterium in their blood and then transmit the bacterium to a human when they have a blood meal. The tick needs to be attached to a person for about 24h before the disease can be transmitted. In the UK, the risk of tick bites is highest from April to October, when the ticks are most active.

Ticks are common in forested areas, heathland, moorland and suburban parks, although infected ticks are more common in certain regions of the UK. Lyme disease is most commonly acquired in the following areas: New Forest; Exmoor; South Downs; Thetford Forest; woodland and heathland in Southern England; Lake District; North York moors; and Scottish Highlands and Islands.

Lyme disease is not spread from person to person.

Occupations and processes where Lyme disease may present a risk

Occupational exposure to *Borrelia burgdorferi* may occur in those who:

- work outdoors in high risk areas of the UK; or
- are in contact with animals in high risk areas of the UK.

Occupations where there may be a risk of occupationally acquired Lyme disease include:

- sheep farmers, particularly hill farmers and from working dogs;
- deer farmers;
- game keepers;
- veterinary surgeons;
- agricultural workers;

- forestry workers;
- nature conservancy workers; and
- rural outdoor pursuits instructors.

Clinical Information

Incubation time is 3–30 days. The first symptom is usually a rash, which spreads from the site of the tick bite. It is not generally painful or itchy. There are often accompanying flu-like symptoms. In a small number of more serious cases there is infection of the nervous system (symptoms include viral-like meningitis, facial palsy, nerve damage).

Anyone with these symptoms who has been in a high risk area should seek medical attention.

Early treatment with antibiotics is generally effective.

Control

The following control measures reduce the risk of infection:

- It is important to be ‘tick aware’ in high risk areas.
- In areas of long grass, wear long trousers tucked in to socks.
- Check exposed skin for ticks (they are very small and therefore difficult to see) and remove immediately with tweezers.
- Check clothing and animals (eg working dogs) for ticks.
- Use insect repellents.

Further Information

[Public Health England – Lyme Disease](#)

[NHS Choices – Lyme Disease](#)