

PUBLIC HEALTH FACT SHEET

No. 107

MELIOIDOSIS

THE FACTS

- Melioidosis is a disease found in Northern Australia and is more common in the Wet “Rainy” Season.
- This disease is caused by a bacteria in the soil which can be transmitted through open cuts or broken skin.
- Anyone can be infected with the Melioidosis germ but it is unlikely to cause a serious problem if the immune system is working well.
- Those people with lower levels of immunity (for example people with diabetes, alcoholism, cancer, kidney disease, and people taking steroid medication) have a greater risk of becoming ill.
- You can become extremely ill within a few days of becoming infected and it can be fatal.
- Symptoms include high fevers and chills, coughing, shortness of breath and difficulty in passing urine.

REDUCE THE RISK

- Wear enclosed shoes when walking/working in wet, pooled water or muddy conditions.
- Wear protective gloves when handling wet soil.
- Wear a mask over nose and mouth when using hoses or high-pressure hoses to clean up after a flood.

fact sheet