



## LEPTOSPIROSIS - SCIENCE

**News:** Kerala's health department has reported 121 confirmed deaths, with an additional 102 suspected cases.

### What's in the news?

#### About Leptospirosis:

It is a disease caused by bacteria that affects people and animals. It's spread in the urine (pee) of infected animals. Leptospirosis risk often increases after a hurricane or flood when people have contact with contaminated water or soil.

#### Details:

Aspect	Details
<b>Causes</b>	Leptospirosis is caused by Leptospira bacteria found in warm, moist environments, particularly in water or soil contaminated with urine from infected animals.
<b>Transmission</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Direct Contact:</b> Through contaminated water or soil, especially via cuts, abrasions, or mucous membranes.</li><li>• <b>Ingestion:</b> Drinking contaminated water can lead to infection.</li><li>• <b>Animal Contact:</b> Direct contact with the urine of infected animals, including rodents, livestock, and pets.</li></ul>
<b>Context in Kerala</b>	Monsoon season increases the risk due to flooding and waterlogging, which facilitate the spread of the bacteria.
<b>Symptoms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Symptoms appear 7 to 14 days post-exposure and range from mild to severe:</li><li>• High fever, headache, chills, muscle aches, vomiting, jaundice, red eyes, abdominal pain, diarrhea.</li><li>• Severe cases may lead to kidney damage, liver failure, respiratory distress, meningitis, or death.</li></ul>

### Outbreak in Kerala

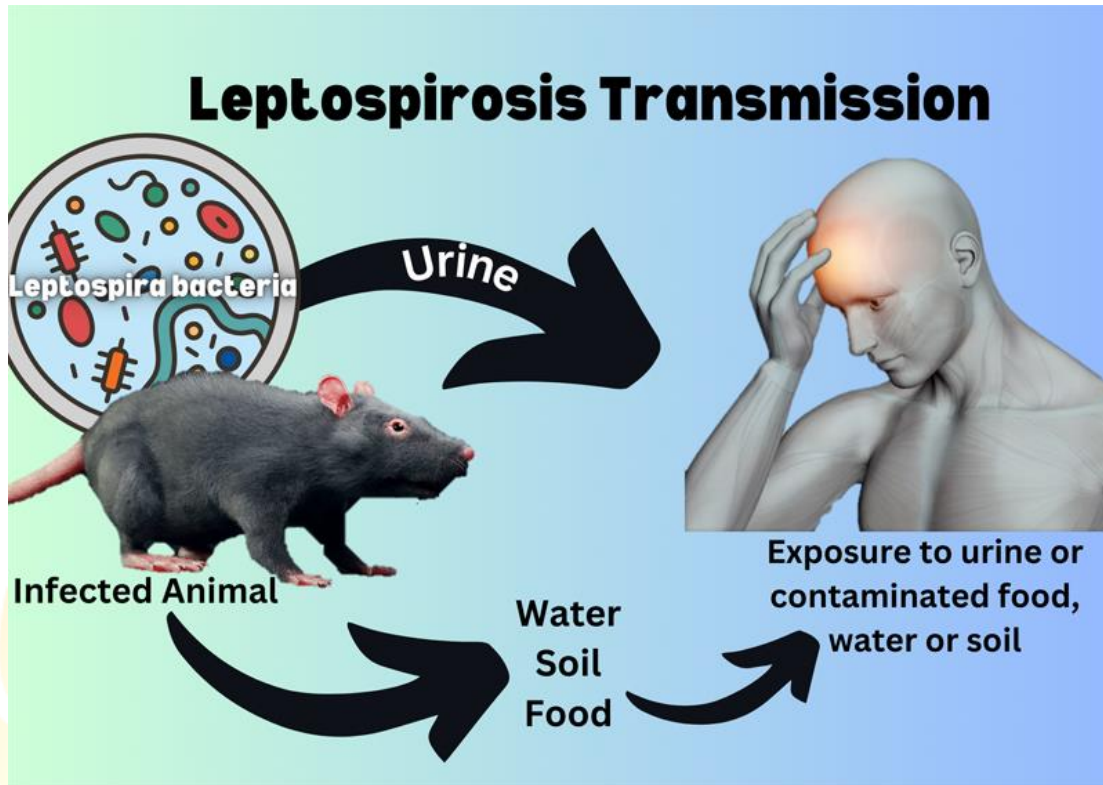
<b>Current Status</b>	Kerala is experiencing a significant leptospirosis outbreak with multiple reported cases, prompting urgent containment efforts.
<b>Contributing Factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Monsoon Rains:</b> Flooding creates ideal conditions for bacterial spread.</li><li>• <b>Rodent Population:</b> Increased rodent activity due to flooding leads to higher contamination of water sources.</li><li>• <b>Hygiene Practices:</b> Poor hygiene and inadequate waste management worsen the spread.</li></ul>

### Response Measures

<b>Public Awareness Campaigns</b>	Educating the public on symptoms, transmission, and prevention.
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<b>Medical Interventions</b>	Distribution of prophylactic antibiotics to high-risk groups, ensuring medical supplies and treatment facilities are available.
<b>Environmental Management</b>	Improved waste management and rodent control efforts to reduce contamination.



### Preventive Measures

<b>Personal Precautions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid wading or swimming in contaminated water.</li> <li>• Wear protective clothing and footwear in wet or flooded areas.</li> <li>• Ensure access to safe and clean drinking water.</li> <li>• Maintain personal hygiene, including frequent handwashing.</li> </ul>
<b>Community Initiatives</b>	<p>Regular rodent control activities and improved waste management.</p> <p>Promote community awareness and education on leptospirosis prevention.</p>

**Source:** <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/health/as-nipah-threat-subsides-kerala-faces-a-new-health-challenge-a-deadly-leptospirosis-outbreak>