# Man Contracts Legionnaires' Disease from Cannabis Bong Water, Highlighting Dangers of Contaminated Water Systems



A 25-year-old man in Connecticut contracted Legionnaires' disease after using a cannabis bong filled with water from a garden hose. Following four days of symptoms including a vigorous cough, confusion, vomiting, and back pain, he sought medical help. A urine test confirmed the bacterial infection, Legionnaires' disease, which often leads to severe pneumonia and lung damage.

The infection, caused by inhaling vapors contaminated with Legionella bacteria, progressed to sepsis, an overreaction of the immune system. The patient’s medical history included addiction to cannabis and alcohol, and he was suffering from emphysema. This severe form of pneumonia is linked to exposure to bacteria in water systems, such as hot tubs, showerheads, and large plumbing systems.

According to the CDC, while most people exposed to Legionella do not become ill, certain groups are more susceptible, including those over 50, smokers, and individuals with chronic lung conditions or weakened immune systems. The CDC estimates between 8,000 to 10,000 cases are reported annually in the U.S., with an expected fatality rate of about 15%.

The patient was treated with a two-week course of antibiotics and discharged after six days. This case, detailed in the American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine, underscores the risks associated with the improper use of water systems for recreational drug use.