

Protect yourself against melioidosis

Melioidosis is a rare but serious infection caused by bacteria commonly found in contaminated soil and water in Northern Australia. Melioidosis cases often occur during the wet season in northern Queensland between December and May and after heavy rain.



How can I protect myself from melioidosis?

- ✓ Avoid contact with soil or muddy water, particularly after heavy rain or flooding.
- ✓ Wear waterproof footwear and protective gloves during clean up following flooding events.
- ✓ Wear a mask when using a high-pressure hose around soil or spraying high pressure bore water.
- ✓ Cover wounds or broken skin with waterproof dressings and wash thoroughly after contact with soil or muddy water.
- ✓ Wash hands with soap and clean water after contact with soil and muddy water, especially before eating and drinking.
- ✓ Avoid mud play or activities that include exposure to deep layers of mud.



The bacteria can enter the body through skin cuts and sores, breathing the bacteria in, or drinking contaminated water.

Melioidosis cases often occur during the wet season after heavy rain and flooding.



Signs and symptoms can develop within days or weeks of exposure to the bacteria and may include:

- fever
- cough
- headaches
- difficulty breathing
- muscle or joint pain
- non-healing ulcers or skin sores.



Melioidosis is rare in healthy adults and children and most people exposed to the bacteria do not get sick.