

Hospital reports patient death amid Legionnaires' outbreak

June 3 2019

A patient has died amid an outbreak of Legionnaires' disease in a recently opened hospital, authorities said.

The patient who died Sunday was among the seven who had been diagnosed with the disease after being hospitalized at Mount Carmel Grove City, Mount Carmel Health System said. It's too early, however, to determine the final cause of death, said Dr. Richard Streck, chief clinical operations officer for the system.

The [hospital](#) is working with state and county health officials to identify the source of the bacteria, Streck said. It is running tests, implementing [water restrictions](#) and doing supplemental disinfection of the water supply, he said.

Patients who develop a cough, muscle aches, headaches, fever or shortness of breath after being hospitalized should contact their primary doctor, Streck said.

The first Mount Carmel Grove City patient diagnosed with Legionnaires', a severe form of pneumonia, was admitted to the 200-bed hospital April 29, the day after it opened, the Ohio Department of Health said in a statement Friday. The department ordered the hospital to test and clean its ice machines, clean and service its on-site cooling towers, and provide all [test results](#) and a water management plan to the Health Department.

People are infected with Legionnaires' by inhaling airborne water droplets containing the Legionella bacterium, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Cooling towers containing water and a fan as part of a centralized cooling system are a potential source for Legionella, the CDC says.

While most [healthy people](#) are unaffected, those over 50, smokers and others with weakened immune systems and [chronic lung disease](#) are most at risk of being infected, the CDC says.

The Mount Carmel system has been under intense scrutiny after discovering that a doctor had prescribed excessive doses of painkillers to 29 patients who died at its other hospitals.

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