

Dear parents,

### **Weil's disease**

One of the risks associated with activities in, on or near open water sources is Leptospirosis. This is a bacterium which can cause Weil's disease in humans. The bacteria is spread in the urine of infected wild and domestic animals. The risk of contracting it in the UK is very low and it can be easily treated with antibiotics if caught. However if left untreated, Weil's disease can cause serious illness requiring hospital treatment and therefore it's important that you're aware of the potential for infection and of the symptoms to look out for.

Symptoms can occur between 3 days and 4 weeks after exposure. The early symptoms can often appear similar to flu and are likely to appear abruptly. Commons symptoms to be aware of include:

- a high temperature or fever,
- severe head-ache,
- muscle pains,
- abdominal pains,
- nausea,
- diarrhoea,
- conjunctivitis,
- jaundice.

You should see your doctor and request a blood test for Weil's disease if your son/daughter experiences any of these symptoms within 4 weeks of taking part in water activities; tell them you have been involved in water activities and show them this information.

Last updated May 2021 from: BASP Outdoor First Aid manual, [NHS UK](#), [RoSPA](#)