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Media alert from the Media Scanning & Verification Cell, IDSP-NCDC.



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3310	08.03.2016	09.03.2016	Maharashtra	www.timesofindia.com/English http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/pune/Water-borne-diseases-kill-7/articleshow/51303788.cms

Title:	Water-borne diseases rise in Maharashtra
Action By CSU, IDSP -NCDC	Information communicated to SSU-Maharashtra

Maharashtra continues to grapple with preventable water-borne illnesses like cholera, viral hepatitis, gastroenteritis and diarrhoea. More than 5,000 people were hospitalised due to such diseases in 2015. Among them, seven people died due to the complications, shows the latest state health department report.

"The state has registered 5,175 cases and seven deaths in 2015, as against 7,303 cases and 15 deaths in 2014. Micro-planning, regular review meetings of planned work and awareness about using bleaching powder to purify water have helped reduce the outbreaks and deaths," said Kanchan Jagtap, joint director, state health department. Experts, however, say there is an under-reporting of cases and claim that the number of diarrhoeal and gastro deaths could be much higher. "The state health department takes into account only cases and deaths reported at state-run hospitals. Those who report to private hospitals do not get enumerated in the state's figure," said activist Ganesh Borhade.

Water-borne diseases are caused by infectious agents like bacteria, viruses and parasites present in water, soil or air. The most common symptom is diarrhoea. "Infants, children, elderly and individuals with weak immune systems (such as those with HIV) are especially vulnerable to these diseases," said senior paediatrician Sharad Agarkhedkar, former vice-president of the state branch of Indian Medical Association. Gastro, cholera and viral hepatitis claimed two lives each in 2015. The

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**Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), National Centre for Disease Control,
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deaths were reported from the state's tribal districts. Diarrhoea claimed one life in Ratangiri. The most disturbing fact is that these deaths are preventable. "Due to lack of access to safe drinking water, a large number of people, especially those in rural areas, get infected," said activist Sanjeev Dabhade.

Though the number of infections and deaths were lower in 2015 compared to 2014, the number of infections was higher than that of 2013. "The number of cases rose to 7,303 in 2014 but deaths due to complications arising out the water borne infections have reduced consistently in 2014 and 2015," Jagtap said. In 2015, diarrhoea was the biggest worry, with 3,511 infections, followed by gastroenteritis, which affected 1,094 people. Viral hepatitis and cholera affected 367 and 168 people respectively.

Experts say there is an under-reporting of cases and claim that the number of diarrhoeal, gastro, typhoid cases and deaths may be even higher than what is recorded by health authorities.

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