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



Alert ID	Publication Date	Reporting Date	Place Name	News Source/Publication Language
3546	30.07.2016	01.08.2016	Chennai Tamil Nadu	www.timesofindia.com/English http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/Chennai-sees-surge-in-rat-fever-cases/articleshow/53459334.cms
Title:	71 leptospirosis cases reported in district Chennai, Tamil Nadu, in this year			
Action By CSU, IDSP -NCDC	Information communicated to DSU-Chennai, SSU-Tamil Nadu			

With 71 reported cases of leptospirosis, commonly known as rat fever, this year as of July 22, the city is witnessing an almost two-fold increase in the disease compared to the January-July period in 2015. According to data provided by the Greater Chennai Corporation, 18 leptospirosis cases have been reported in July alone. Officials said that the spike was uncharacteristic as the disease is commonly reported during the monsoon season. "There is no need for panic as leptospirosis is curable. Only when it is diagnosed late does it lead to complications such as renal failure and death," said a senior health official.

The city reported 129 leptospirosis cases in 2015 but the January-July period had only 42 cases. The aftermath of the floods in December 2015 coincided with the year's peak, when as many as 39 cases were reported. The October-December period accounted for 67 cases in 2015.

However, vector-borne diseases like dengue and malaria are seeing a downward spiral, officials said. As many as 78 dengue cases have been reported so far while the number is 516 for malaria. "No fatality related to dengue and malaria has been reported in 2016. Dengue and malaria cases are well under control and we are

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Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), National Centre for Disease Control,
Ministry Of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India

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working towards achieving the government's target of zero dengue deaths," said an official.

Diarrhea cases too have fallen with 1,584 instances recorded till July, as compared to the 2213 recorded between January and July in 2015. Only four cases of swine flu have been reported in the city so far this year whereas 139 swine flu instances were reported by the end of July in 2015.

With respect to leptospirosis, corporation officials said that the disease's absence from the notified list was making it difficult for them to monitor cases. Former director of public health Dr S Elango said that the inclusion of leptospirosis in the notified list was deemed unnecessary as its case fatality rate was low. "An easier way to keep track of leptospirosis would be to monitor the jaundice cases," he said, adding that acute leptospirosis leads to jaundice and only these patients are considered at risk.

State public health department officials said that the government was nevertheless contemplating the inclusion of leptospirosis in the notified disease list.

According to Dr K Kulandaisamy, director of public health, "Though we have not had an epidemic concern with leptospirosis, we may include it in the notified diseases list when it comes up for revision later this year." However, the strength of surveillance for the disease was not dependent on its notification status, he added.

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