

3-30-2021

COVID-19 and Lead Poisoning: Debunking the Myth

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Recommended Citation

Gupte, Trisha; Leonardi, Nyla; Montgomery, James; Washington, K.; Barrow, Taylor; and Elshebiny, Hassan, "COVID-19 and Lead Poisoning: Debunking the Myth" (2021). *COVID-19 Medical Myth Infographics*. 9. <https://digitalcommons.wayne.edu/covidinfographics/9>

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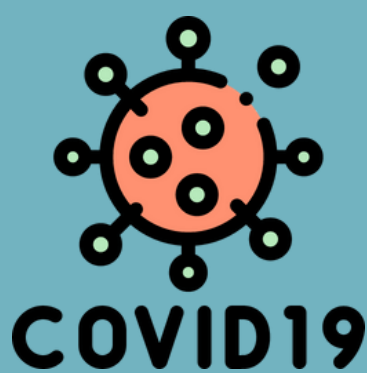
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COVID-19 AND LEAD POISONING: DEBUNKING THE MYTH

COVID-19 does not affect everyone equally. Communities already facing healthcare crises like Flint, MI may face higher co-infections of COVID-19 and Legionnaire's Disease.

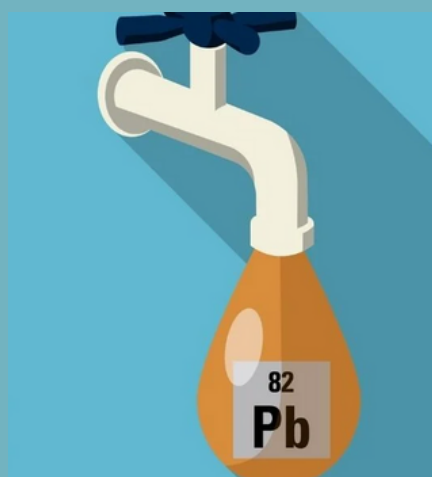


What is COVID-19

COVID-19 is a respiratory virus that became a worldwide pandemic in early 2020. It has infected more than 50 million people worldwide. People often have flu-like symptoms but in some cases it can escalate and be much more severe or even fatal.

What is Legionnaire's Disease?

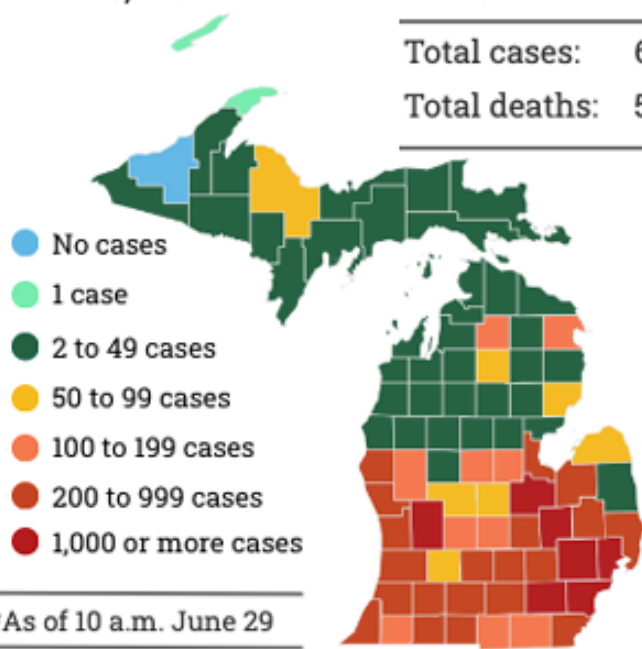
When there is a buildup of lead in water, the corrosive conditions can lead to growth of the bacteria Legionella pneumophila. This causes infection of Legionnaire's Disease which can cause respiratory problems for people infected with it.



Coronavirus in Michigan

Michigan health officials are testing residents daily and announcing results. This map shows home residence of those who've tested positive for the virus; their current locations aren't known.

Total cases: 63,497
Total deaths: 5,915



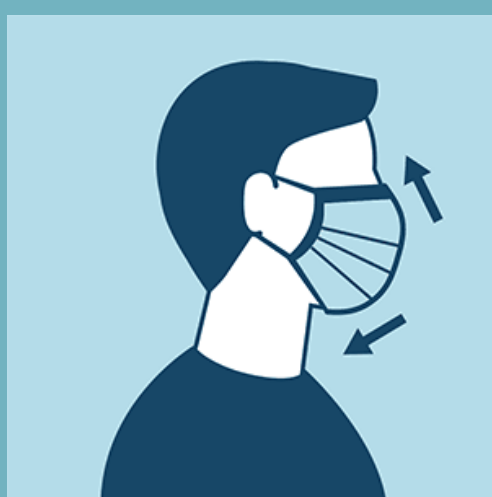
Source: Michigan Department of Health & Human Services

Flint Water Crisis

In April 2014 the leaders of Flint decided to switch the water supply for the city to come directly from the Flint river. The Flint river treatment plant is a small plant that was not able to treat the water effectively to clean lead out of it which resulted in growth of Legionella pneumoniae.

Flint and COVID-19

Flint is still dealing with contaminated water and does not have the resources to deal with both crises. COVID cases have been high in Flint and having COVID can make individuals more susceptible to Legionnaire's Disease.



What can you do to protect yourself

For COVID-19, ensure that you wear a mask, wash your hands, and keep at least six feet distance from others in public space.

To protect from lead poisoning, if your home has lead-based paint, check regularly for peeling paint and fix problems promptly.

Prepared by the students from

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