

## *Weils Disease (Leptospirosis)*

All water users should be aware of this potentially fatal infection.

This is a bacterial infection normally believed to be spread by rat urine, it can also be transmitted by cat, fox and rabbit urine.

Transmission is usually through an open wound or abrasion but can also be caused by ingestion of contaminated water.

### SYMPTOMS

Lethargy, diarrhoea, headaches, vomiting and muscle pain; sometimes referred to as flu like symptoms. If left untreated this can be fatal.

### PREVENTION

Prevention measures against water borne infections are to:

- ❖ Cover all cuts and abrasions with waterproof plasters
- ❖ Always wear footwear to avoid cutting the feet
- ❖ Avoid capsize or rolling practice in suspected waters
- ❖ Where possible, shower soon after the activity
- ❖ As a minimum always wash your hands after paddling and before eating or drinking

If you feel ill after paddling you should tell your Doctor as soon as possible and let them know where and when you have been on the water.

*The NHS publish the following guidance*

*[www.nhs.uk/conditions/Leptospirosis/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Leptospirosis/)*

Further information & support is available when required by contacting:

[safety@britishcanoeing.org.uk](mailto:safety@britishcanoeing.org.uk)