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## WATCH OUT: Common rainy day diseases



Goodbye, Summer; Hello, Rain!

According to the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA), the country has already shifted from the dry to the wet season signaled by the widespread rainfall. But, it's not the only thing that we should be wary of for it has got unwanted company – diseases.

Here are the five common rainy season diseases and some tips on how to prevent them.

### DENGUE

It is one of the most common diseases in tropical and subtropical countries in the world like the Philippines. It is acquired from the bite of a female *Aedes aegypti*. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the year 2015 was characterized by large dengue outbreaks worldwide, with more than 169,000 cases reported in the country.

Prevention:

- ✓ Cover water containers to prevent mosquitoes from breeding.
- ✓ Clean water containers at least once a week.
- ✓ Observe proper garbage disposal.
- ✓ Apply mosquito repellent properly.
- ✓ If available, sleep under a mosquito net to avoid getting bitten at night.

### LEPTOSPIROSIS

It is a bacterial infection commonly transmitted through rodent bites and other vermin. It can also be acquired from ingestion of contaminated food and exposure of cuts and open wounds to flood with urine or feces of infected animals. Earlier this year, leptospirosis cases rose in Mindoro with a total of 58 cases recorded in less than a month by the DOH-MIMAROPA.

Prevention:

- ✓ Avoid swimming in flood water.
- ✓ Wear necessary protective clothing and footwear when walking through flood water.
- ✓ Cover scratches, cuts and wounds with clean bandages.
- ✓ Wash hands especially before eating and drinking.
- ✓ Eliminate rodents in the household using mouse traps and other mouse deterrents like peppermint and moth balls.

### INFLUENZA

Commonly called flu, influenza is a viral infection affecting the respiratory system causing chills, fever, sore throat, coughs

and colds, and fatigue. People who have weak immune systems are highly susceptible to the virus.

Prevention:

- ✓ Avoid crowded places.
- ✓ Cover mouth and nose when sneezing and coughing.
- ✓ Minimize contact with people with influenza.
- ✓ Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water.
- ✓ Drink plenty of fluids and eat nutritious food.

### CHOLERA

This acute intestinal infection is caused by consuming contaminated food or drinking water with the bacterium *Vibrio cholerae*. In 2011, cholera was one of the top ten causes of death in the country according to the report of the World Health Organization (WHO).

Prevention:

- ✓ Drink safe and clean water only.
- ✓ Cook food well.
- ✓ Practice safe food and water storage.
- ✓ Observe proper hygiene.
- ✓ Keep surroundings clean.

### COUGH AND COLD

Many types of viruses can cause coughs and colds. Both are passed on by coughing and sneezing the virus on air. Often, they ease on the next few days.

Prevention:

- ✓ Wash hands frequently with soap and water.
- ✓ Cover mouth and nose when sneezing and coughing.
- ✓ Drink 8-12 glasses of water everyday.
- ✓ Sleep for 8 hours.
- ✓ Rest at home.

So even without the sun shining and the rains keep rolling in, you are still in tip-top shape to have fun ranging from staycations to foodtrips. Now, turn that gloomy day into a wonderful activity safe and sound.

**Daryl M. Jaramilla**

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