

What should I do if I become ill?

If you fall ill with symptoms after water sports, particularly from 3-19 days following, then see your doctor immediately. Common symptoms are sudden onset of fever, intense headache, and severe pains in calf and back muscles, red eyes and prostration.

If you have any illness after water sports go straight to your GP and tell them that you about your participation and draw their attention to the possibility of Hepatitis or Weil's disease. Show your doctor this leaflet and make them aware of:

**The Lepto Spirosis Reference Unit
Public Health Laboratory
County Hospital
Hereford
HR1 2ER**

Please also make us aware of any illness by telephoning our hot line on **0115 981 8032**



How to find us



This publication can be made available in alternative formats and languages to ensure it is fully accessible to the reader.

Contacting us

email nwscsales@nottsc.gov.uk
 phone **0115 982 1212**
 fax **0115 945 5213**
 post **National Water Sports Centre,
 Adbolton Lane, Holme Pierrepont,
 Nottingham NG12 2LU**
 internet www.nwscnotts.com
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Important Notice for Water Users

National Water Sports Centre NOTTINGHAMSHIRE



Remain safe and healthy



The Sporting County

The National Water Sports centre has a wide range of water sports and activities that take place in open and natural waters. This natural and beautiful environment is one of the main attractions of the site but as with any open water it is important to observe some simple rules to remain safe and healthy.

The water facilities at the National Water Sports Centre are supplied from a variety of sources including surface streams and the River Trent. The waters have fluctuating levels of bacteria and are similar to those found in UK coastal sea bathing waters.

This leaflet details potential risk to health that exists in any open water but please remember that the vast majority of water users at the site have no problem at all and by remaining mindful and following the tips below the risks are further decreased.

Stay safe and healthy

Whilst enjoying your water sports always remember to:

- Avoid undue immersion in natural waters.
- Avoid swallowing the water.
- Cover minor scratches or cuts with a water proof plaster.
- Wash or shower as soon as possible after water sports and before eating or drinking.
- Use footwear to protect your feet.
- Rinse equipment with clean water after use.

What kind of illness may occur?

The vast majority of people using the National Water Sports Centre facilities have no ill effects at all. The most common illness found is a mild Tummy Upset. On very rare occasions this can lead to diarrhoea and vomiting. Should this occur you are advised to consult a doctor. Flu-like symptoms and mild respiratory symptoms may also occur, as may eye and ear symptoms. These generally resolve themselves rapidly without treatment.

More Serious Infections

Whilst it is extremely rare to contract the following infections, there is a risk in any open water so it is important to be informed and follow the preventative measures shown above.

Hepatitis A (Infectious Hepatitis)

Hepatitis A is a virus infection of the liver which can vary from mild or non-apparent illness to, rarely, a severe disabling disease lasting several months. The infection is caused by swallowing food or water contaminated with the virus which is present in faeces of infected patients and in waters contaminated with sewage. Infection may also be caused by swallowing water during sports.

The incubation period varies from 2 to 6 weeks after swallowing the virus. The onset illness is abrupt, with loss of appetite, fever, nausea and abdominal discomfort, followed within a few days by jaundice. If you become ill at any time with these symptoms, call your doctor and tell them you have participated in water sports activities.

Leptospirosis (Weil's Disease)

Human infection usually comes from organisms shed in the urine of infected animals. Infections can range from a mild flu-like illness to a serious illness requiring hospital treatment and sometimes leading to kidney or liver failure. When jaundice occurs (from liver failure) the illness, known as Weil's disease, can be fatal and is a notifiable illness, but it is fortunately a very rare occurrence.

How is the disease caught?

The infection which causes Weil's disease is commonly carried by rats and excreted in rat urine, which contaminates water and wet river banks. The bacteria do not survive in dry conditions.

The likelihood of becoming infected is less in swift moving streams and rivers than stagnant or slow moving waterways, particularly in high water conditions.

The infection can enter the body through skin abrasions or through eyes, nose and mouth. It can enter the bloodstream more rapidly through minor cuts in skin, especially on the feet, or if you roll or do capsizing drill.

