



PR#299-22

PRESS RELEASE

Ministry of Health & Wellness Advises on Vector and Waterborne Diseases Due to Flooding

Belmopan. October 12, 2022. 10:00 a.m.

The Ministry of Health & Wellness advises that flood waters can be the source of many infectious diseases, chemical hazards and injuries and, therefore, urges the public to avoid walking, working or playing in floodwaters. Exposure to contaminated floodwater can cause wound infections, skin rashes, stomach illnesses, tetanus and waterborne diseases such as typhoid fever, cholera, leptospirosis and hepatitis A.

The ministry recommends the following ways to remain safe after a flood:

- Always stay out of floodwater, especially if you have an open wound.
- Cover any open wounds you may have with a waterproof bandage to reduce the chance of infection.
- Keep open wounds as clean as possible by washing them well with soap and clean water. Seek medical attention if necessary.
- Wear boots, rubber gloves and goggles if you must enter flood waters.
- Always practice good personal hygiene.

The public is also advised that as a result of increased rains and floods, breeding sites for mosquitoes will also increase as a result of stagnant water. All persons living or going into the affected areas must exercise caution to prevent mosquito bites, which could cause dengue and other vector-borne diseases. Everyone is asked to protect themselves by using long-sleeved clothing and long pants, using mosquito repellent and mosquito coils, and ensuring windows are properly screened or closed before nightfall. Where possible, communities are asked to clean their surroundings and remove containers with standing water that can be breeding sites for mosquitoes.

Please visit your nearest public health or vector control office for more information.

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For more information, please contact:

John Bodden

Principal Public Health Inspector

Ministry of Health & Wellness

822-2325

jbodden@health.gov.bz