



Melioidosis

[Source: TH](#)

A recent study highlights how **climate conditions**, particularly **monsoon-related factors**, influence the spread of **melioidosis**.

- **Melioidosis:** It is a **bacterial infectious disease**, linked to **rainfall, temperature, and humidity**.
 - It is caused by ***Burkholderia pseudomallei*** and primarily **acquired** by **inoculation, inhalation and/or ingestion** of soil- and water-dwelling environmental **saprophytes**.
- **South Asia** (endemic to **Bangladesh and Sri Lanka**), including **India**, accounts for **44%** of global melioidosis cases, with **Odisha** as a **hotspot** due to its agriculture and extreme weather.
 - It is primarily found in **Northern Australia and Southeast Asia**.
- Symptoms range from **mild skin infections** to **severe pneumonia and sepsis**, with a fatality rate of up to **50% in septic cases**.
 - It is **not transmitted** from **animals to humans**, and **human-to-human** transmission is **rare**.
- Melioidosis can be **treated** with antibiotics but it trouble doctors because:
 - **Diverse Symptoms:** Causes a wide range of infections, from **mild skin issues to severe pneumonia and sepsis**.
 - **Diagnostic Challenges:** Often **misidentified** as ***Pseudomonas aeruginosa***, a more common bacterium, leading to **inappropriate treatment**.
 - **Complex Treatment:** Needs **prolonged therapy (12-20 weeks)** with a risk of **recurrence** if not treated properly.

What is 'Meliodosis'?

- ♦ A disease caused by the bacterium *Burkholderia pseudomallei*
- ♦ Humans can become infected through contact with contaminated soil and surface waters (especially through skin abrasions/wounds); inhalation of contaminated dust/water droplets; and ingestion of contaminated water

Person-to-person transmission is rare

Persons with underlying diseases or immunosuppression are the high risk groups

Preventive measures:



Clean cuts or grazes and cover with waterproof dressings



Wear appropriate protective clothing or footwear when participating in activities with possible contact with soil or waters, and wash hands afterwards



Avoid contact with contaminated soil



Observe personal and food hygiene and avoid drinking raw water

Read More: [Climate Change & Infectious Diseases](#)

PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtiias.com/printpdf/melioidosis>