



**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
AND MENTAL HYGIENE**  
Oxiris Barbot, MD  
*Acting Commissioner*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**Wednesday, October 10, 2018**  
**(347) 396-4177**

**STATEMENT FROM ACTING HEALTH COMMISSIONER DR. OXIRIS BARBOT ON  
THE LEGIONNAIRES' DISEASE CLUSTER IN LOWER WASHINGTON HEIGHTS**

“The Health Department has confirmed 16 cases of Legionnaires’ disease associated with the Lower Washington Heights cluster. One person who had underlying health conditions has died. New York City has the strongest enforcement regarding cooling towers in the nation, and we continue to take very aggressive steps to respond to this cluster and prevent more people from becoming sick. The Health Department has investigated every cooling tower in the area, ordering landlords to remediate where necessary and has provided information to residents. The risk to residents of contracting Legionnaire’s disease remains very low; however, adults with flu-like symptoms, like fever, cough, or difficulty breathing should seek immediate medical attention so a doctor can determine whether Legionella testing is needed. Legionnaires’ disease is not contagious and is easily treatable with antibiotics. People get Legionnaires disease by breathing in water vapor containing the bacteria.”

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