



## **Weils Disease Precautionary Notice 22.7.2010**

### **What is Weils Disease**

Weil's disease is an infection that humans can catch from animals. Perhaps most commonly however, the disease is spread by rats. Rats carry and excrete an organism called *Leptospira ictero-haemorrhagiae* in their urine. Between 50 and 60% of all rats carry this organism. If humans are infected with this organism, it can make them very ill and even result in death. As many as 10% of all cases of human infection have resulted in death.

The organism that causes Weil's disease in humans cannot live for very long in dry conditions, but it can survive for some length in wet or damp areas. Salt water will kill off the organism.

The organism that causes Weil's disease enters the body through cuts, blisters or abrasions in the skin. It can also enter via the lining of the nose or through the throat or alimentary tract. Weil's disease begins with a fever, followed by muscular aches and pains. Loss of appetite and vomiting follow. The incubation period for Weil's disease is 7 to 13 days.

The sufferer may experience bruising of the skin, nose bleeds, sore eyes and jaundice. The fever lasts about a week and is usually followed by significant deterioration. The symptoms of Weil's disease can easily be mistaken for flu. If the sufferer has a clean occupation, the possibility of Weil's disease may be overlooked in the early stages, but a blood test will confirm the diagnosis of Weil's disease. Treatment for Weil's disease is usually a penicillin antibiotic.

### **Simple precautions**

As a precaution do not leave edible food items in your swim and remember to take home all rubbish. These simple actions will help to reduce the rodent population around our waters.

To reduce risk of infection always carry plasters in your tackle box, along with Sterile wet wipes and hand cleaner. Cover any broken skin that may come in contact with water. Uncovered open cuts in water can become contaminated with this disease.

Members at all times are responsible for their own Health and Safety on any club waters.

**The Health and safety Officer CAPS LTD.**