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Washing in rat urine infected lake water put me in hospital

By Joel Adams



A FATHER suffered kidney disease and sepsis after showering in lake water he believes was infected with rat urine.

Anthony Wright, 48, became ill with Weil's disease – an infection spread via animal urine – which he claims he contracted after cooking food and showering in water pumped directly from a lake while on a fishing trip in France.

Carpet fitter Mr Wright became ill when he returned home from the holiday, eventually being rushed to hospital.

He was left “scared and embarrassed” after being tested for HIV and Aids while doctors tried to establish the cause of the illness from which he still has not recovered.

In May last year, Mr Wright, who has two sons and two stepsons, was on a fishing trip to Lac Du Menhir near Calais.

He said: “We were on a fishing holiday, staying in tents and using the facilities at a wood cabin on site for meals and showers.

“We didn’t realise there was no mains water and it was all being pumped from the lake into tanks.

“The owner said he had a filtration system but it wasn’t, it was just a chemical put into the water.

“There was a sign advising not to drink the tap water but we’d been cooking, washing our pots and showering in it.

“The place was alive with rats. When you got in your tents at night you could just hear them all running around.”

The weekend after he returned home Mr Wright began to suffer flu-like symptoms.

He added: “I was playing a game of cricket and started feeling freezing cold even though it was 60 degrees. By Wednesday, I couldn’t walk. The doctor came out. She put it down to flu but by the Friday night I was in hospital feeling really rough. I had sepsis and acute kidney disease.

“The doctor said if I’d waited another couple of days my kidneys would have been damaged beyond repair.”

Eventually doctors diagnosed Mr Wright with leptospirosis, which is also known as Weil’s disease. It is rare in the UK with fewer than 40 cases annually, but the infection can cause life-threatening problems including organ failure and internal bleeding.

Mr Wright, from Rye, said: “All my family thought I was going to die. I wouldn’t let my sons come to the hospital to see me, I only let my mum come because she thought I was going to die.”

After never taking a day work off in 15 years, Mr Wright had to stop working for six months, leaving him with no income.

Despite everything, Mr Wright – who is taking legal action against the Lac Du Menhir resort just outside Paris – says it has not put him off his hobby.

He said: “I’ve been fishing since I was five and even this isn’t going to put me off!”

Sarah Pople, a travel specialist at Slater and Gordon law firm which is representing Mr Wright said: “When people go on holiday, one of the most basic things they ask is for clean water to wash in. We believe Lac Du Menhir failed to provide this and, as a result, Mr Wright sustained potentially life threatening injuries.”

The owners of Lac Du Menhir did not respond to The Argus’s requests for comment.