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Avoiding zoonotic diseases in flood recovery efforts

If you are making plans to help with the North Queensland flood recovery efforts, first make plans to look after yourself.

Due to the large changes in the environment in the wake of the North Queensland flood event, it's important that you protect yourself during recovery efforts. Soil borne pathogens, such as melioidosis, may become dispersed into new areas. Diseases spread by biting insects may also become problematic, as warmer periods after weather events provide favourable conditions for a population boom. Handling deceased livestock can also have human health impacts.

There are some simple ways to protect yourself from diseases that may be present after a weather event such as the one we have seen in North Queensland. These include:

- Cover up where practical or use insect repellent when outside, especially if there is still water lying around
- Wear enclosed shoes or boots in mud and cover up exposed cuts with water proof bandages.
- Take care when [disposing of carcasses](#) or working with sick livestock, including wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and clean water, particularly after handling livestock and before eating
- Manage vermin populations accordingly and wash or discard items that have come in contact with vermin faeces and/or urine.
- Visit your local GP immediately if you become unwell and inform them you have been exposed to after flood conditions
- If you are injured or suffer a cut during the clean-up process, clean the wound and seek medical advice immediately by contacting your general practitioner or by calling the 13HEALTH information line (13 432584), as you may need a tetanus vaccination and/or other medical care.

For more information:

- [Animal Health Australia's Zoonotic Disease Information](#)
- [Carcass disposal – February 2019](#)
- [Melioidosis](#)
- [Managing Mosquito Risk](#)
- [Q Fever](#)
- [Leptospirosis](#)
- [Brucellosis](#)

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About Animal Health Australia

Animal Health Australia works in partnership with our Members and other stakeholders to keep Australia free of new and emerging diseases and to improve animal health, enhance market access and foster resilience and integrity of the Australian animal health system.