



Safe Rowing Note

Subject	Poor Water Quality and Water-Borne Disease		
Note number	14	Version	1
Date	30 October 2024		
<p>Key Points</p> <p>Never drink river water.</p> <p>Wash hands thoroughly after rowing. This is particularly important before eating or drinking.</p>			
<p>Poor Water Quality</p> <p>The quality of water can be reduced by chemicals or microorganisms that do not occur naturally in the river, usually from sewage or agricultural run-off. This toxic discharge poses threats to both wildlife and human health.</p> <p>E.Coli levels in the river are monitored. This gives an indication of harmful bacteria and viruses in the water that can lead to Weil's Disease, also known as Leptospirosis. The disease is carried by water organisms, so those taking part in water sports can be exposed to a very low level of risk. The simple routine precautions outlined below will reduce the likelihood of harm occurring.</p>			
<p>What to Do</p> <p>Clean all cuts and grazes thoroughly.</p> <p>Cover all cuts, grazes, and blisters with waterproof dressing when exposed to contaminated water.</p> <p>Wear suitable footwear when entering/leaving a boat, to prevent direct contact with the water.</p> <p>Wash or shower after significant contact with river water, especially if you have exposed cuts/grazes.</p> <p>Clean down all equipment with soapy water after outings to remove potential contamination.</p> <p>Take extra care over river water quality after floods as the flood water will have passed over farmland and sewage treatment plants will be overloaded, both causing a higher quantity of contaminated water to enter the river.</p>			
<p>What NOT to Do</p> <p><u>Do not</u> drink water from rivers, lakes, or canals.</p> <p>Take care not to swallow water that splashes close to your mouth.</p>			
<p>What To Do If You Feel Ill</p> <p>See your doctor soon if you have symptoms associated with ingesting poor-quality water.</p> <p>Inform the Club if you have contracted a disease associated with a waterborne cause so that others can be encouraged to take greater precautions.</p>			
<p>Club Action If Member Becomes Unwell</p> <p>Ensure anyone becoming unwell from ingesting river water receives appropriate medical attention.</p> <p>Report health incident to British Rowing, following Safe Rowing Note 6 on Incident Reporting.</p>			