DOH on alert on leptospirosis as cases surge in Quezon City

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THE Department of Health yesterday raised an alert over a potential surge in leptospirosis cases following intense monsoon rains and successive tropical storms that inundated parts of the country in recent weeks.

"There have been 3,037 cases of leptospirosis recorded from January 1 to July 19, 2025. Of this number, 1,114 were reported starting June 8, or one week after PAGASA officially declared the start of the rainy season on June 2," the health agency said.

It identified East Avenue Medical Center, Sta. Ana Hospital, and the National Kidney and Transplant Institute as having the most admissions related to the disease.

Leptospirosis is a bacterial infection transmitted through direct contact with the urine of infected animals such as rats and pigs, or through floodwaters contaminated with their waste.

Symptoms of the disease include fever, chills, body aches, headaches, and eye redness, which typically appear between two days and
four weeks after exposure.

If untreated, leptospirosis can lead to severe complications, including liver, kidney, lung, or heart failure.

The DOH advised individuals experiencing symptoms to seek immediate medical attention and obtain a prescription before taking doxycycline, the antibiotic used for treatment.

Meanwhile, Quezon City reported a sharp rise in cases, prompting local officials to sound the alarm over what they described as an emerging public health threat.

"Leptospirosis can be deadly, so it should never be taken lightly. The Quezon City Government is ready to help every QCitizen, from providing free medicine to ensuring full recovery," said city Mayor Joy Belmonte.

Data from the Quezon City Epidemiology and Surveillance Division showed that the city logged 43 new infections between July 24 and 30, surpassing the epidemic threshold.

From July 17 to 30, Quezon City recorded 67 cases, pushing the city beyond weekly epidemic benchmarks during the same period.

As of July 30, the city has tallied 178 leptospirosis cases for 2025, which is nearly 23 percent higher than the total recorded from January to July last year.

The death toll in Quezon City has climbed to 23 this year, a 12 percent increase compared to the 18 deaths reported during the same period in 2024.