



Leprosy

Australian national notifiable diseases case definition

This document contains the surveillance case definition for leprosy, which is nationally notifiable within Australia. State and territory health departments use this definition to decide whether to notify the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care of a case.

Version	Status	Last reviewed	Implementation date
1.0	Initial CDNA case definition	2004	2004

Reporting

Only a **confirmed case** should be notified.

Confirmed case

A **confirmed case** requires either **laboratory definitive evidence** OR **laboratory suggestive evidence** AND **clinical evidence**.

Laboratory definitive evidence

Detection of *Mycobacterium leprae* by nucleic acid testing from the ear lobe or other relevant specimens.

Laboratory suggestive evidence

Demonstration of characteristic acid fast bacilli in slit skin smears and biopsies prepared from the ear lobe or other relevant sites

OR

Histopathological report from skin or nerve biopsy compatible with leprosy (Hansen's disease) examined by an anatomical pathologist or specialist microbiologist experienced in leprosy diagnosis.

Clinical evidence

Compatible nerve conduction studies

OR

Peripheral nerve enlargement

OR

Loss of neurological function not attributable to trauma or other disease process

OR

Hypopigmented or reddish skin lesions with definite loss of sensation