



Swimming Safety – Healthy Swimming

Recreational water illnesses (RWIs) are illnesses you can get from swallowing, breathing or coming into contact with contaminated water in swimming pools, water parks, hot tubs, lakes, rivers or oceans. The most commonly reported RWI is diarrhea caused by germs like "Crypto," *Giardia*, *Shigella*, and *E. coli* O157:H7. Although these germs are eventually killed by chlorine, it doesn't work right away. Some germs, like "Crypto," can live in pools for days. Do your part to help prevent the spread of disease in local lakes and pools. Follow these steps for a healthy swimming experience:

- Do not swim when you have diarrhea. Germs can be spread in the water and make other people sick.
- Do not swallow pool water or get pool water in your mouth.
- Shower before swimming and wash your hands after using the toilet or changing diapers.
- Take children on bathroom breaks or change their diapers often.
- Change diapers in a bathroom or in a diaper-changing area and not at poolside.
- Wash your child thoroughly (especially their bottom) with soap and water before swimming.
- Notify the lifeguard immediately if you see fecal matter in the water.

For more information about RWI prevention and healthy swimming, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Healthy Swimming website at www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming or the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Beaches website at www.epa.gov/beaches.