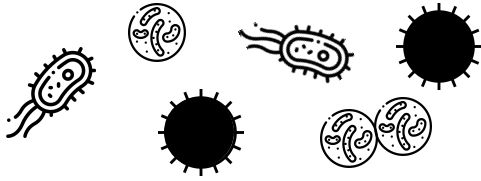


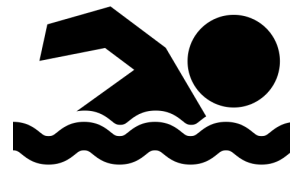


Waterborne Illnesses

Fact Sheet



Waterborne illnesses are spread by germs that contaminate water in water sources. These germs include *Cryptosporidium*, *E. coli*, *Giardia*, norovirus, and *Shigella*.



The primary way waterborne illnesses spread is by swallowing germs. Swimming pools, hot tubs, water parks, spas, lakes, rivers, ponds, oceans, and other water sources can be infected with germs.

Common Signs and Symptoms



Diarrhea



Nausea and Vomiting



Stomach Pain



Fever

Waterborne illnesses include stomach, skin, ear, respiratory, eye, neurologic, and wound infections. The most common sign is diarrhea. People with weak immune systems, pregnant women, and children may be at greater risk for more severe illness.



The germs that cause waterborne illnesses are spread when someone with diarrhea swims in the water. Lakes, rivers, and oceans can become contaminated by sewage, animal waste, and fecal accidents.



Talk to a healthcare provider if you are sick after water activity. Most people will get better without any medicine.

Prevent Waterborne Illnesses

The best way to prevent waterborne illnesses is to practice good hygiene and to avoid water that might be infected with germs. Practice these healthy swimming behaviors to prevent illness:



Do not swim when you have diarrhea



Do not swallow water and avoid getting it in your mouth



Shower with soap before swimming



Take your kids on bathroom breaks and check diapers often



Change diapers in a bathroom or a diaper changing area and not at poolside



Wash your hands with soap and water after using the toilet and changing diapers

Check chlorine and pH levels on a regular basis as part of good pool operation. Do not swim in areas that are identified as unsafe by Maine Healthy Beaches Program or state and local agencies.

For More Information, Visit:



1. www.maine.gov/dhhs/healthyswimming
2. www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming
3. www.mainehealthybeaches.org
4. www.epa.gov/beaches

You can also call Maine CDC at 1-800-821-5821.