

## NATIONAL RECREATIONAL WATER ILLNESS PREVENTION

Outbreaks of recreational water illnesses continue to occur in the United States each year. Sixty-two percent of these outbreaks are related to the chlorine-resistant pathogen, *Cryptosporidium*, (“Crypto”) which is introduced into the pool by swimmers who are ill with diarrhea and spread to other swimmers when they swallow the contaminated water. These outbreaks underscore the continuing need to educate people about recreational water illness prevention to ensure a healthy swimming experience.

Awareness of recreational water illnesses (RWIs) and healthy swimming behaviors play an important role in stopping transmission of RWIs. Germs on and in swimmers’ bodies end up in the water and can make other people sick. Even healthy swimmers can get sick from RWIs, but the young, elderly, pregnant women and immunosuppressed persons are especially at risk. Specific actions you can take to promote healthy swimming include:

1. Do not swim when you have diarrhea.
2. Do not swallow pool water or get pool water in your mouth.
3. Shower before swimming (children too!).
4. Wash your hands after using the toilet or changing diapers.
5. Take children on bathroom breaks or change diapers often.
6. Change children’s diapers in a bathroom, not at poolside.

Recreational water venues are important sites for exercise and leisure. To make this summer a Healthy Swimming experience, the Ledge Light Health District and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention urge swimmers to continue to enjoy swimming, but only after adopting healthy swimming behaviors to reduce the risk of recreational water illnesses.

For more information about Recreational Water Illness Prevention and Healthy Swimming, contact Ledge Light Health District or visit <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming>.