

Illnesses Spread by Recreational Waters

Can swimming in a pool, spa, lake or ocean make me sick?

Yes. Recreational water illnesses (RWI's) are spread by swimming in contaminated waters. Fecal matter rinsed off of the bodies of swimmers can cause millions of germs to enter recreational waters. Swallowing contaminated water can lead to a diarrheal illness. Other recreational water illnesses can cause symptoms, including skin, ear, respiratory, eye, and wound infections. For further information on how swimming can make you sick, please visit:

www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming/faq/swimmers1.htm

What types of illnesses can be spread from swimming?

There are a number of recreational water illnesses (RWI's) that are spread by swallowing, breathing, or having contact with contaminated water from swimming pools, spas, lakes, rivers, or oceans. The most commonly reported RWI is diarrhea. Diarrheal illnesses can be caused by germs such as Cryptosporidium, Giardia, Shigella, and E. coli O157:H7. For further information on recreational water illnesses, please visit: www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming

What is Swimmer's Itch?

Cercarial dermatitis, most commonly known as swimmer's itch, is a skin rash caused by an allergic reaction to infection with certain parasites. For further information on swimmer's itch, please visit: www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dpd/parasites/schistosomiasis/factsht_cardmer

What is Hot Tub Rash?

Hot tub rash, pseudomonas dermatitis, is a dermatitis infection most often caused by the germ pseudomonas aeruginosa. To learn more about hot tub rash, please visit:

www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming/derm.htm

What is Swimmer's Ear?

Swimmer's ear, otitis externa, is most often caused by the germ pseudomonas aeruginosa. To learn more about swimmer's ear, please visit:

www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming/swimmers_ear.htm