



May 2, 2018

Dear Colleague:

The week before Memorial Day, May 21–27, 2018, marks the 14th annual **Healthy and Safe Swimming Week** (HSSW). This is a great time to engage and collaborate with operators of public treated aquatic facilities, beach managers, the media, residential pool or hot tub/spa owners, and the public to maximize the health benefits of water-based physical activity by minimizing the risk of illness and injury.

This year’s theme is “Swim Healthy. Stay Healthy.” CDC will issue a *MMWR* report in mid-May that reviews 15 years of data (2000–2014) on outbreaks associated with treated recreational water, particularly outbreaks caused by parasites such as *Cryptosporidium* and bacteria such as *Legionella* and *Pseudomonas*. Although we have made great strides in some areas, we can do more to help ensure healthy swimming for everyone. We’re encouraging the public to follow CDC’s steps of healthy swimming to stay healthy at pools, hot tubs/spas, and water playgrounds.

In late June, CDC will issue a *MMWR* report that reviews 15 years of data (2000–2014) on outbreaks associated with untreated recreational water (fresh- or marine water). You can help maintain the momentum of Healthy and Safe Swimming Week throughout the summer by sharing information about a few simple but effective steps swimmers and parents of young swimmers can take to prevent illness caused by norovirus, *Escherichia coli*, *Shigella*, *Cryptosporidium*, harmful algal blooms, or *Naegleria fowleri* (also known as “the brain eating ameba”) and associated with untreated recreational water.

We developed this health promotion toolkit to support your HSSW efforts. It includes community outreach suggestions; a web-based resource list; a sample press release, feature, and proclamation; and suggested social media messages. We hope you will find these resources useful as you engage your community during this awareness week and throughout the summer swim season. For more information on HSSW, visit: www.cdc.gov/healthywater/observances/hss-week/index.html.

Finally, as many of you know, the third edition of CDC’s Model Aquatic Health Code (MAHC; www.cdc.gov/mahc) will be released this summer. The MAHC is national guidance that can be adopted voluntarily by state and local jurisdictions to minimize the risk for illness and injury at public treated aquatic facilities. CDC is evaluating 180 MAHC change requests and revising the MAHC accordingly.

Thank you for your commitment to promoting healthy and safe swimming.

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**National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases (NCEZID)
National Center for Environmental Health (NCEH)
National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (NCIPC)**

**Healthy and Safe Swimming Week
May 21–27, 2018**

Outreach Suggestions for Community Partners and the Public

All Audiences

- Update or create a Healthy and Safe Swimming Week (HSSW) webpage on your agency’s website.
 - Copy content from CDC’s Healthy Swimming website and safe swimming webpages while maintaining the look of your website (content syndication). Visit <https://tools.cdc.gov/medialibrary/index.aspx#/results> or contact healthywater@cdc.gov for more information.
 - See “Web-based Resource List” in toolkit and include links to CDC’s Healthy Swimming, Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs), and *Naegleria* (or “the brain-eating amoeba”) websites and safe swimming pages; EPA’s Beaches and CyanoHABs websites; and CPSC’s Pool Safely website.

Media

- Provide press release to media outlets (see “Sample Press Release” in toolkit).
 - Share information on
 - Latest public health data on illness and injury associated with recreational water and
 - Steps we can all take to prevent recreational water–associated illness and injury.
- Have media shadow inspection of public treated aquatic facility or water quality testing at the beach.
- Hold press conference during HSSW.
- Write healthy swimming feature (see “Sample Feature” in toolkit) for your state/local newspaper.

Bathers and Parents

- Disseminate healthy and safe swimming promotion materials at pools, beaches, childcare centers, etc.
 - Download and share CDC materials: www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/materials/index.html.
- Disseminate healthy and safe swimming messages through newsletters or e-mail announcements that are distributed by schools, camps, apartment/condominium complexes, fairs, etc.
- Spread the word about healthy and safe swimming on social media (see “Suggested Social Media Messages” in toolkit).

Public Treated Aquatic–Facility Operators and Beach Managers

- Include information on healthy and safe swimming in training for public treated aquatic–facility operators and beach managers.
- Collaborate with public treated aquatic–facility operators and beach managers to promote HSSW.
 - Provide healthy and safe swimming promotion materials.
- Increase public treated aquatic–facility operators’ awareness of CDC’s Model Aquatic Health Code: www.cdc.gov/mahc.
- Promote learn-to-swim and CPR training opportunities as community drowning prevention strategies.
 - Check out World’s Largest Swim Lesson: www.worldslargestswimminglesson.org/.
 - Check out Watersafety USA: www.watersafetyusa.org/.

Healthcare Providers

- Provide healthy and safe swimming materials.
- Engage your local chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (www.aap.org) or other organizations for healthcare professionals.

Community Leaders

- Create fact sheets for community leaders (such as program administrators, boards of health, and elected officials) detailing specifics about your agency’s HSSW efforts.
- Collaborate on HSSW proclamation (see “Sample Proclamation” in toolkit).

Let us know about your activities related to Healthy and Safe Swimming Week!

Email us at healthywater@cdc.gov.



Healthy and Safe Swimming Week 2018



Links to Healthy and Safe Swimming Information and Resources

General Information	
Healthy Swimming Website	www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming
Healthy and Safe Swimming Week	www.cdc.gov/healthywater/observances/hss-week/index.html
Safe Swimming Webpages	www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/swimmers/drowning-injury-sun-protection.html
CPSC's Pool Safely Website	www.poolsafely.gov
General Info: Oceans, Lakes, Rivers	www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/oceans-lakes-rivers/index.html
EPA's Beaches Website	www.epa.gov/beaches
Prevention Resources	
How to Swim Healthy Links	www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/swimmers/swim-healthy.html
Healthy Swimming Promotion Materials	www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/materials/index.html Printed English and Spanish healthy swimming brochures and pool chemical safety posters (one on storage, the other on use) available FREE! www.cdc.gov/habs/materials/index.html Updates coming summer 2018! www.cdc.gov/parasites/naegleria/materials.html
Swim Diapers/Swim Pants	www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/swimmers/swim-diapers-swim-pants.html
Breastfeeding in Pools and Hot Tubs/Spas	www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/swimmers/breastfeeding-in-pools.html
Resources for Public Health Professionals	
Healthy Swimming Data and Statistics	www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/publications.html
MMWR Outbreak Summary Reports	www.cdc.gov/healthywater/surveillance/rec-water-surveillance-reports.html
Online Environmental Public Health Course	www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/eLearn/EPHOC.htm (See Swimming Pools and Recreational Facilities)
Model Aquatic Health Code (MAHC)	www.cdc.gov/mahc
Resources for Public Treated Aquatic-Facility Operators	
Fecal Incident and Outbreak Response Recommendations	www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/aquatics-professionals/fecalresponse.html
Animals and Pools	www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/residential/animals/index.html
Resources for Beach Managers and Those Who Swim in Fresh- or Marine Water	
Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB)-associated Illness	www.cdc.gov/habs/index.html
EPA's CyanoHABs Website	www.epa.gov/nutrient-policy-data/cyanohabs
Naegleria ("The Brain-Eating Ameba")	www.cdc.gov/parasites/naegleria
Healthy Swimming Links by Additional Audiences	
Healthcare Professionals	www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/medical-professionals/index.html

Healthy and Safe Swimming Week 2018
Key Healthy and Safe Swimming Messages for State or Local Press Release

The following information summarizes a variety of healthy and safe swimming messages, intended to be customized to best meet each state or local community's priorities and needs before distributing. States or local communities may choose which messages to highlight in a press release from the table below when observing Healthy and Safe Swimming Week.

For Release [date]

**Contact: Name, title
 Phone/e-mail**

Healthy and Safe Swimming Week 2018

<City, State> — The week before Memorial Day (May 21–27, 2018) is Healthy and Safe Swimming Week. The goal of this awareness week is to maximize the health benefits of swimming by minimizing the risk of illness and injury. Just 2.5 hours of physical activity every week, including water-based physical activity, can benefit everyone's health. Each of us plays a role in preventing illnesses and injuries linked to the water we swim in and share, this summer and year-round.

Why Is This Important?	A Few Simple but Effective Prevention Steps We Can All Take
<p>Illnesses caused by the germs in the places we swim: In 2000–2014 (the last year for which national data are available), ~500 outbreaks were linked to swimming in pools, hot tubs/spas, and water playgrounds. Most of the outbreaks caused by germs were caused by <i>Cryptosporidium</i> (or "Crypto" for short), <i>Legionella</i>, or <i>Pseudomonas</i>.</p> <p>Pool disinfection chemicals (bromine, chlorine) can kill most germs in public pools, hot tubs/spas, and water playgrounds within minutes at concentrations recommended by CDC and typically required by state and local health departments. But Crypto can survive for days at these chlorine concentrations. Diarrheal incidents in the water can easily spread Crypto and cause outbreaks if the contaminated water is swallowed. <i>Legionella</i> and <i>Pseudomonas</i> live in biofilm (slime on wetted surfaces). This means they are protected and can grow even when pool disinfection chemical concentration is properly maintained. Lungs can get infected with <i>Legionella</i> when breathing in contaminated water droplets produced by hot tub/spa jets. Water contaminated with <i>Pseudomonas</i> can cause hot tub or swimmer's ear on exposed skin.</p> <p>Healthy swimming is not just about the steps the pool operators and pool inspectors take—so let's all do our part to help keep ourselves, our families, and our friends healthy this summer and year-round.</p> <p>For more info, visit www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming.</p>	<p>Everyone:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't swim or let your kids swim if sick with diarrhea. • Check the latest public pool, hot tub/spa, and water playground inspection scores online or onsite. • Do your own mini-inspection before getting into any pool, hot tub/spa, or water playground. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check to make sure that the water's pH and bromine or free chlorine concentration are correct*. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For additional inspection steps, visit https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/materials/infographic-inspection.html <p>*Use test strips to test pH and bromine or free chlorine concentration. Most superstores, hardware stores, and pool-supply stores sell pool test strips. Follow the manufacturer's directions. CDC recommends pH 7.2–7.8 and free chlorine concentration of at least 3 ppm in hot tubs/spas and at least 1 ppm in pools and water playgrounds OR bromine concentration of at least 4 ppm in hot tubs/spas and at least 3 ppm in pools and water playgrounds.</p> <p>FREE printed English and Spanish Healthy Swimming brochures are available at www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/materials/brochures.html.</p> <p>Healthy Swimming Factsheets www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/materials/factsheets.html.</p>
<p>Drowning:</p>	<p>Keep swimmers safe in the water.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure everyone knows how to swim.

<p>Each day, two children younger than 14 years die from drowning. Drowning is a leading cause of death for children 1–4 years old.</p> <p>For more info, visit www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationalSafety/Water-Safety/waterinjuries-factsheet.html.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use life jackets appropriately. • Provide continuous, attentive supervision close to swimmers. • Know CPR. <p>Prevent access to water when pool is not in use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install and maintain barriers like 4-sided fencing. • Use locks/alarms for windows and doors.
<p>Injuries Caused by Mishandling Pool Chemicals:</p> <p>Pool chemicals are added to maintain water quality (for example, to kill germs). Each year, however, mishandling of pool chemicals when treating public or residential/backyard pools, hot tubs/spas, and water playgrounds leads to 3,000–5,000 visits to U.S. emergency departments.</p> <p>For more info, visit www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/aquatics-professionals/preventing-pool-chemical-events.html.</p>	<p>Operators and residential owners should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and follow directions on product labels. • Wear appropriate safety equipment such as goggles when handling pool chemicals. Check product labels for directions on what to wear. • Secure pool chemicals to protect people, particularly young children, and animals. • Add pool chemical poolside ONLY when directed by product label and when no one is in the water. <p>Prevent violent, potentially explosive, reactions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEVER mix different pool chemicals with each other, particularly chlorine products and acid. • Pre-dissolve pool chemicals ONLY when directed by product label. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Add pool chemical to water, NEVER water to pool chemical. <p>FREE printed and laminated poster on safe storage and poster on safe use available at www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/materials/posters.html.</p>
<p>Harmful Algal Blooms:</p> <p>Algae can grow in warm, nutrient-rich fresh- and marine water. An abundant growth of algae that harms people or animals is referred to as a harmful algal bloom (HAB). HABs in fresh- and marine water can produce toxins that cause a variety of symptoms including skin irritation, coughing, sneezing, diarrhea, stomach pain, numbness, and dizziness. Symptoms vary depending on the type of HAB toxin and the type of exposure, such as skin contact, ingestion by eating food or drinking water contaminated with HAB toxins, or breathing in tiny droplets or mist contaminated with HAB toxins.</p> <p>For more info, visit www.cdc.gov/habs.</p>	<p>Avoid water that contains harmful algal blooms—when in doubt, stay out!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for water body or beach advisories from local public health authorities or beach managers. If the beach is closed, stay out. • Don't swim, water ski, or boat in areas where the water is discolored or where you see foam, scum, or mats of algae on the water's surface. • Avoid entering or swimming in bodies of water that contain or are near dead fish or other dead animals. • Keep children and pets from playing in or drinking scummy water. • Get out and rinse off with clean water as soon as possible, if you swim in water that might contain a harmful algal bloom. • Rinse off pets, especially dogs, immediately, if they swim in scummy water. Do not let them lick the algae off their fur.
<p><i>Naegleria fowleri</i> “The Brain-eating Ameba”:</p> <p><i>Naegleria fowleri</i> is a microscopic ameba (a single-celled living organism) that is commonly found in warm freshwater such as lakes, rivers, and hot springs. If water containing the ameba goes up the nose forcefully, the ameba can invade and cause a rare and devastating infection of the brain called primary amebic meningoencephalitis (PAM).</p> <p>For more info, visit: www.cdc.gov/parasites/naegleria.</p>	<p><i>Naegleria fowleri</i> infection is rare. The only certain way to prevent an infection due to swimming is to stay out of freshwater. However, you can reduce your chance of getting an infection by limiting the amount of freshwater going up your nose. To limit the amount of freshwater going up your nose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold your nose or use nose clips when taking part in freshwater-related activities. • Avoid putting your head underwater in hot springs and other warm freshwater bodies. • Avoid water-related activities in all warm freshwater bodies during periods of higher than normal water temperature. • Avoid digging in or stirring up mud and scum while taking part in water-related activities in shallow, warm freshwater.

Healthy and Safe Swimming Week 2018
Sample Feature

It's Not the Chlorine in the Pool that's Making Your Eyes Red...

Have your eyes ever started to sting and turn red when you were swimming in a pool? Did you think it was because of the chlorine in the water? Have you ever walked into an indoor pool area, gotten a whiff of a strong chemical smell, and thought, "Wow, there's a lot of chlorine in the pool?"

It's actually not the chlorine. You're smelling a group of chemical compounds created when chlorine reacts with pee, poop, sweat, or dirt from swimmers. These chloramines irritate the eyes and respiratory tract, can aggravate asthma, and cause a strong chemical smell at indoor pools. These chloramines are different from the type of chloramine which is sometimes used to treat our drinking water.

Healthy swimming depends, in part, on what we swimmers keep out of the treated water we swim in this summer and year-round. We all share the water we swim in, and we each need to do our part to keep ourselves, our families, and our friends healthy. Don't forget, in addition to being an all-American way to have fun with family and friends, swimming can be a way to keep physically active. Just 2.5 hours of physical activity, including water-based physical activity, per week has health benefits for everyone. The health benefits for children are wide reaching. Studies have shown that children with asthma might have fewer symptoms when swimming regularly compared with other asthmatic children and that children in general benefit socially from contact with other children at recreational water venues (for example, pools and lakes). For pregnant women, water-based physical activity can help regulate body temperature, minimize stress on joints during exercise, and prevent or control diabetes brought on by pregnancy. Water-based physical activity also improves women's bone health after menopause and improves older adults' ability to carry out everyday activities.

Popular Olympic swimmers have publicly admitted to peeing in the pool. They've laughed about it, and comedians have joked about it. But really, where else is it acceptable to pee in public? Mixing chlorine and pee not only creates chloramines—it also uses up the chlorine in the pool, which would otherwise kill germs. These germs can get into the water when they wash off swimmers' bodies or when infected swimmers have diarrheal incidents in the water. Just one diarrheal incident can release enough *Cryptosporidium* (or "Crypto" for short) into the water that swallowing a mouthful can cause diarrhea lasting 2–3 weeks.

Even when the concentration of a pool disinfection chemical (chlorine or bromine) and the pH (which can maximize chlorine's and bromine's germ-killing power) are well maintained, germs aren't instantly killed. Crypto, the leading cause of disease outbreaks linked to pools, can survive in an adequately chlorinated pool for days. In 2000–2014 (the last year for which national data are available), over 200 outbreaks in the United States were caused by Crypto and linked to pools, water playgrounds, and hot tubs/spas. **<NOTE: Consider substituting national statistics with state/local statistics to increase**

state/local interest.> This is a reminder that the water we swim in and share is not germ free and this is why it's important for each of us to do our part to keep germs, pee, poop, sweat, and dirt out of the water in the first place.

To help prevent chloramines from forming and to protect your health and the health of your family and friends, here are a few simple and effective steps all of us can take each time we swim:

- Don't swim or let your kids swim if sick with diarrhea.
- Shower before you get in the water.
- Don't pee or poop in the water.
- Don't swallow the water.

Every hour—everyone out!

- Take kids on bathroom breaks.
- Check diapers, and change them in a bathroom or diaper-changing area—not poolside—to keep germs away from the pool.

These steps will help you protect yourself and your loved ones while maximizing the health benefits and swimming enjoyment. Healthy swimming is not just about the steps the pool operators and pool inspectors take. So let's all do our part to help keep ourselves, our families, and our friends healthy this summer and year round.

Remember...Think Healthy. Swim Healthy. Be Healthy!

**Healthy and Safe Swimming Week 2018
Sample Proclamation**

Adapted from proclamation developed by
Environmental Management Department of Sacramento County, California
**RESOLUTION OF <INSERT NAME OF AUTHORIZING ORGANIZATION/PERSON>
PROCLAIMING MAY 21–27, 2018 AS
“HEALTHY AND SAFE SWIMMING WEEK”
IN <INSERT NAME OF JURISDICTION>**

WHEREAS, the <INSERT NAME OF AUTHORIZING ORGANIZATION/PERSON> considers the health and safety of its residents and visitors its highest priority; and

WHEREAS, during the week of May 21–27, 2018, the <INSERT NAME OF PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY>, together with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), will be conducting educational outreach to prevent illness and injury linked to the water we swim in and share, and thus, maximize health benefits for all; and

WHEREAS, the week of May 21–27, 2018 has been set aside to raise public awareness of the importance of healthy and safe swimming and to reinforce education among those who operate and maintain swimming pools, water playgrounds, or hot tubs/spas or manage beaches; and

WHEREAS, on behalf of the residents and visitors of <INSERT NAME OF JURISDICTION>, we are pleased to join local, state, and federal agencies, in ensuring healthy and safe swimming in <INSERT NAME OF JURISDICTION>; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of the ongoing efforts of the dedicated men and women who are trained to ensure health and safety standards are met at public swimming pools, water playgrounds, hot tubs/spas, and beaches in this <State/County/City> and who have conducted over <INSERT COUNT> inspections of public swimming pools, water playgrounds, and hot tubs/spas or conducting water testing at beaches; and

WHEREAS, the <INSERT NAME OF PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY> also provides information on how to actively protect health and safety of all; and

WHEREAS, the theme of Healthy and Safe Swimming Week 2018 is “*Swim Healthy. Stay Healthy.*” because as swimmers, parents, aquatics staff, residential pool or hot tub/spa owners, and public health officials, we each play a role in preventing illnesses and injury in the places we swim; and

WHEREAS, the <INSERT NAME OF AGENCY/AGENCIES> provide(s) <INSERT LIST OF AGENCIES’ EFFORTS TO PROMOTE HEALTHY AND SAFE SWIMMING, INCLUDING ANY TRAINING WORKSHOPS FOR POOL OPERATORS OR BEACH MANAGERS AND POSITIVE OUTCOMES>; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the <INSERT NAME OF AUTHORIZING ORGANIZATION/PERSON>, does hereby proclaim the week of May 21–27, 2018 as “**HEALTHY AND SAFE SWIMMING WEEK**” in <INSERT NAME OF JURISDICTION> to focus attention on the importance of preventing illness and injury linked to the water which we swim in and share for the protection of our residents and visitors now and throughout the year.

-<ADD JURISDICTION-SPECIFIC AUTHORIZING SIGNATURES, SEALS, ETC.>



Healthy and Safe Swimming Week 2018



Sample Social Media Messages

Images to accompany social media messages are available at www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/materials/buttons-banners.html

Awareness Week – General

- It's Healthy & Safe Swimming Week! Learn how to stay healthy & safe in the water this summer & all year #HSSW <https://go.usa.gov/xXqce>
- Don't let germs or injury interrupt fun in the water. Learn more during Healthy & Safe Swimming Week #HSSW <https://go.usa.gov/xXqce>
- Educate yourself & family about the steps of healthy swimming during Healthy & Safe Swimming Week #HSSW <https://go.usa.gov/xXqce>

Illness prevention

- Don't swim with diarrhea! A single diarrheal incident in the water can add millions of germs go.usa.gov/xXqxD
- Don't swallow the water you swim in! 1 mouthful of water w/ diarrhea germs can make you sick for up to 2–3 weeks go.usa.gov/xXqxD
- Protect kids & other loved ones this summer! Report if you or your child has diarrhea while swimming go.usa.gov/xXqxD
- Diarrhea & swimming don't mix! Don't swim or let your kids swim when sick with diarrhea go.usa.gov/xXqxD
- Chlorine and bromine don't work instantly—some germs can survive for days. Don't drink the water you swim in! <https://go.usa.gov/xXqce>
- Help keep germs out of pool water! If you have cryptosporidiosis, wait 2 weeks after diarrhea stops before swimming go.usa.gov/xXqxD

Naegleria fowleri (the brain-eating amoeba)

- Headed to the lake or river this summer? Learn tips to help prevent Naegleria fowleri (brain-eating amoeba) infection go.usa.gov/xXqkM
- Infection with the “brain-eating amoeba” is rare but almost always deadly. Learn more before swimming this summer go.usa.gov/xXqkM
- Limiting water going up nose when swimming in lake can help prevent Naegleria fowleri (brain eating amoeba) infection go.usa.gov/xXqkM

Harmful Algal Blooms

- Headed to the lake or beach this summer? Learn tips for spotting harmful algal blooms before swimming www.cdc.gov/habs
- Some types of algae are harmful to people & pets. Learn how to protect yourself, family, & pets this summer go.usa.gov/xXq9K
- Swimming in water with harmful algal blooms can cause illness. Learn more before swimming this summer www.cdc.gov/habs

Drowning

- Learn how to stay safe in the water and prevent drowning <https://go.usa.gov/xQKV9>
- CDC has tips to help you stay safe in the water. Learn more about how you can prevent drowning <https://go.usa.gov/xQKV9>
- Learn to swim! Formal swimming lessons in children as young as 1 year old can reduce the risk of drowning <https://go.usa.gov/xQKV9>
- Heading out on the boat? Wear a life jacket! Life jackets can reduce your risk of drowning <https://go.usa.gov/xQKV9>