



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention

April 18, 2017

Dear Colleague:

The week before Memorial Day, May 22–28, 2017, marks the thirteenth annual **Healthy and Safe Swimming Week** (HSSW). This is a great time to engage and collaborate with aquatic facility operators, beach managers, the media, residential pool or hot tub/spa owners, and the public to maximize the health benefits of water-based physical activity while minimizing the risk of recreational water-associated illness and injury in your community.

The theme of this year's HSSW is "Diarrhea and Swimming Don't Mix." Diarrheal incidents (e.g., *Cryptosporidium* contamination events) in recreational water can lead to outbreaks. Public health and the aquatic sector should collaborate to educate bathers and encourage them to stay out of recreational water if they have diarrhea to help keep their families and friends healthy.

We also encourage you to educate bathers about risks related to swimming in untreated venues such as lakes, where exposure to *Naegleria fowleri*, "the brain-eating ameba," and harmful algal blooms (HABs) can occur. In consultation with state and federal partners, CDC developed the One Health Harmful Algal Bloom System (OHHABS), which provides local, state, and territorial public health partners a mechanism to voluntarily report human and animal cases of harmful algal bloom-associated illness. CDC launched OHHABS in June 2016. To learn more about OHHABS, visit www.cdc.gov/habs/ohhabs.html.

To encourage and support your HSSW efforts, we have provided this health promotion toolkit, which includes community outreach suggestions; a web-based resource list; and a sample press release, op-ed piece, and proclamation. We hope you will find these resources useful as you engage your community during HSSW. For additional information about HSSW, visit:

www.cdc.gov/healthywater/observances/hss-week/index.html.

Finally, the second biennial conference of the Council for the Model Aquatic Health Code (CMAHC) will be held October 17–18, 2017 in Denver, Colorado. The conference will provide a forum to discuss proposed changes to CDC's Model Aquatic Health Code (national guidance to minimize the risk for illness and injury at public aquatic facilities) that CMAHC members will vote on. Voting results will be sent to CDC for consideration in developing the 2018 MAHC (3rd Edition). If you are not yet a CMAHC member, become a member today (www.cmahc.org/become-a-member.php) and help ensure that public health's voice is heard!

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Healthy and Safe Swimming Week

May 22–28, 2017

Outreach Suggestions for Community Partners and the Public

All Audiences

- Update (or create) 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 and feel of your website (i.e., content syndication). Visit <http://tools.cdc.gov/syndication> or contact healthywater@cdc.gov for more information.
 - Include links to CDC's Healthy Swimming, Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs), and *Naegleria* (or "brain-eating ameba") websites and safe swimming pages, EPA's Beaches and HABs websites, and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's Pool Safely website (see "Web-based Resource List" in toolkit).

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 or
 - Steps we can all take to prevent recreational water-associated illness and injury.
- Have media shadow inspection of public aquatic facility or water quality testing at fresh or marine beach.
- Hold press conference during HSSW.
- Write healthy swimming op-ed article (see "Sample Op-Ed Piece" 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.

Aquatic Facility Operators and Beach Managers

- Include information on healthy and safe swimming in aquatic facility operator and beach manager training.
- Collaborate with aquatic facility operators and beach managers to promote HSSW.
 - Provide healthy and safe swimming promotion materials.
- 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 organization for healthcare professionals.

Community Leaders

- Create fact sheets for community leaders (e.g., 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 2017



Links to CDC Healthy and Safe Swimming Information and Resources

General Information	
Healthy Swimming Website	www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming
HSSW	www.cdc.gov/healthywater/observances/hss-week/index.html
Safe Swimming Links	www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/swimmers/drowning-injury-sun-protection.html
CPSC's Pool Safely Website	www.poolsafely.gov
Prevention Resources	
How to Swim Healthy Links	www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/swimmers/swim-healthy.html
Healthy Swimming Materials	www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/materials/index.html
Healthy Swimming Brochure	www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/materials/brochures.html Printed English and Spanish brochures available for FREE!
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 & 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
Council for the MAHC (CMAHC)	www.cmahc.org Become a CMAHC member to be eligible to vote on changes to the MAHC and help ensure that public health's voice is heard!
Resources for Aquatic-Facility Operators	
Fecal Incident Response Recommendations	www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/aquatics-professionals/fecalresponse.html NEW July 2016
Pool Chemical Safety	www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/aquatics-professionals/preventing-pool-chemical-events.html Printed posters on safe storage and handling available for FREE!
Animals and Pools	www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/residential/animals/index.html
Resources for Swimming in Fresh and Marine Waters	
General Info: Oceans, Lakes, Rivers	www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/oceans-lakes-rivers/index.html
EPA's Beaches Website	www.epa.gov/beaches
Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB)-associated Illness	www.cdc.gov/habs/index.html NEW June 2016
EPA's CyanoHABs Website	www.epa.gov/nutrient-policy-data/cyanohabs
<i>Naegleria</i> (or "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 2017

Sample Press Release

The following information summarizes a variety of healthy and safe swimming messages, intended to be customized to best meet each state's 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 the awareness week.

For Release [date]

Contact: Name, title
Phone/e-mail

Healthy and Safe Swimming Week 2017

<City, State> — The week before Memorial Day (May 22–28, 2017) is Healthy and Safe Swimming Week. The goal of this Week is to maximize the health benefits of swimming by promoting healthy and safe swimming. Just 2.5 hours of water-based (or other forms of) physical activity per week has health benefits for everyone. Each of us plays a role in preventing illnesses and injuries linked to the water we share and swim in, this summer and year-round.

Why Is This Important?	A Few Simple and Effective Prevention Steps We Can All Take
<p>Illnesses caused by the germs in the places we swim:</p> <p>In 2011–2012 (the last years for which national data are available), 90 outbreaks were linked to swimming; almost half of these outbreaks were caused by <i>Cryptosporidium</i> (or “Crypto” for short). Chlorine can kill most germs within minutes at concentrations recommended by CDC and typically required by state and local health departments. But Crypto can survive more than 1 week at these chlorine concentrations. Diarrheal incidents in the water we share and swim in can easily spread germs and potentially cause outbreaks. Because chlorine and other disinfectants don’t kill germs instantly, it’s important to keep these germs, particularly Crypto, out of the water in the first place and not drink the water we share and swim in, this summer and year-round.</p> <p>For more info, visit www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming</p>	<p>Every swimmer should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stay out of the water if you have diarrhea.• Shower before you get in the water.• Don’t pee or poop in the water.• Don’t swallow the water. <p>Every hour—everyone out!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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. <p>FREE printed English and Spanish Healthy Swimming brochures are available at www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/materials/brochures.html</p>
<p>Drowning:</p> <p>Every day, two children less than 14 years old die from drowning. Drowning is a leading cause of injury death for children ages 1–4 years.</p> <p>For more info, visit www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationalSafety/Water-Safety/waterinjuries-factsheet.html</p>	<p>Keep swimmers safe in the water.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make sure everyone knows how to swim.• 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 and weight-bearing pool covers.• Use locks/alarms for windows and doors.

<p>Injuries caused by mishandling pool chemicals (for pool operators and residential pool owners):</p> <p>Pool chemicals are added to maintain water quality (for example, kill germs). Each year, however, mishandling of pool chemicals by operators of public pools and residential/backyard pool or hot tub/spa owners leads to 3,000–5,000 visits to emergency departments across the United States.</p> <p>For more info, visit www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/aquatics-professionals/preventing-pool-chemical-events.html</p>	<p>Pool operators and residential pool owners should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and follow directions on product labels. • Wear appropriate safety equipment (for example, goggles), as directed on product labels, when handling pool chemicals. • Secure pool chemicals to protect people, particularly young children, and animals. • Add pool chemicals 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 handling 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 waters. When there is an abundant growth of algae that harms people or animals, it is referred to as a harmful algal bloom (HAB). HABs in fresh and marine waters can produce toxins that cause a variety of illnesses including skin irritation, coughing, sneezing, diarrhea, stomach pain, numbness, and dizziness. Symptoms can 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/index.html</p>	<p>Avoid water that contains harmful algal blooms—when in doubt, stay out!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for waterbody or beach advisories announced by 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 or pets from playing in or drinking scummy water. • If you do swim in water that might contain a harmful algal bloom, get out and rinse off with fresh water as soon as possible. • If pets, especially dogs, swim in scummy water, rinse them off immediately. Do not let them lick the algae off of 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 like lakes, rivers, and hot springs around the world. 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 not to participate in fresh water-related activities. However, you can take steps to reduce your chance of getting an infection by limiting the amount of fresh water going up your nose. To limit the amount of fresh water going up your nose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold your nose or use nose clips when taking part in fresh water-related activities. • Avoid putting your head underwater in hot springs and other warm fresh water bodies. • Avoid water-related activities in all warm freshwater bodies during periods of high water temperature. • Avoid digging in or stirring up mud and scum while taking part in water-related activities in shallow, warm freshwater areas.

Healthy and Safe Swimming Week 2017

Sample Op-Ed

Sunburn and Injuries Aren't the Only Culprits that Can Steal the Fun Out of Swimming this Summer

Dear Editor,

As the summer swim season approaches, adults and children will be flocking to local pools for fun in the sun and exercise. Not only is swimming a great way to have fun with family and friends, it's also a fun form of physical activity. Just 2.5 hours of water-based (or other forms of) physical activity per week have health benefits for everyone. However, swimming, like any form of physical activity, is not risk-free. While sunburn and injuries might be the most well-known health risks associated with swimming, diarrhea is another culprit — and outbreaks of diarrheal illness linked to swimming are on the rise.

That's why it's so important to stay out of the water if you have diarrhea. We all share the water we swim in, and we each need to do our part to help keep ourselves and our families and friends healthy. Just one diarrheal incident in the water can release enough germs such that swallowing a mouthful of the water can cause diarrhea lasting up to 2–3 weeks.

Many people think chlorine will kill germs in the water instantly, but some germs can survive days in properly chlorinated pools. A diarrhea-causing germ called *Cryptosporidium* (or Crypto) can survive in an adequately chlorinated pool for more than 1 week. Crypto has become the leading cause of disease outbreaks linked to swimming. <Consider adding state/local outbreak statistics to increase state/local interest.>

You can help protect yourself and your family and friends from diarrheal illness by following a few simple and effective steps while at the pool this summer and year round:

- Stay out of the water if you have diarrhea – swim diapers will not contain diarrhea if your child has an accident in the pool!
- Don't poop in the water.
- Don't swallow the water.
- Do your part! Report it if you or your child has a diarrheal incident while swimming.

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.

Healthy swimming is not just about the steps the pool operators, beach managers, and health departments take. We all need to do our part to help keep ourselves, our families, and friends healthy this summer and year round, to maximize the fun and health benefits of swimming.

Healthy and Safe Swimming Week 2017

Sample Proclamation

Adapted from proclamation developed by

Environmental Management Department of Sacramento County, California

RESOLUTION OF <INSERT NAME OF AUTHORIZING ORGANIZATION/PERSON>

PROCLAIMING MAY 22–28, 2017 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 22–28, 2017, 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 share and swim in and thus maximize health benefits for all; and

WHEREAS, the week of May 22–28, 2017 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 fresh or marine 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 made by 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>, in part, by conducting 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 2017 is *Diarrhea and Swimming Don’t Mix*, 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 PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY> provides <INSERT LIST OF PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY’S 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 22–28, 2017 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 share and swim in 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 2017



Suggested 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/xQce>
- Don't let germs or injury interrupt fun in the water. Learn more during Healthy & Safe Swimming Week #HSSW <https://go.usa.gov/xQce>
- Educate yourself & family about the steps of healthy swimming during Healthy & Safe Swimming Week #HSSW <https://go.usa.gov/xQce>

Diarrhea and Swimming Don't Mix

- Don't swim with diarrhea! A single diarrheal incident in the water can introduce millions of germs go.usa.gov/xQxD
- Don't swallow the water you swim in! 1 mouthful of water w/ diarrhea germs can make you sick for 2-3 weeks go.usa.gov/xQxD
- Protect kids & other loved ones this summer! Report if you or your child has diarrhea while swimming go.usa.gov/xQxD
- Diarrhea & swimming don't mix! Don't swim or let your kids swim when sick with diarrhea go.usa.gov/xQxD
- Chlorine doesn't work instantly—some germs can survive in pools for days. Don't drink the water you swim in! <https://go.usa.gov/xQce>
- Help keep pool water germ free! If you have cryptosporidiosis, don't swim until you are diarrhea-free for 2 weeks go.usa.gov/xQxD

Naegleria fowleri (the brain-eating ameba)

- Headed to the lake or river this summer? Learn tips to help prevent infection from the ameba Naegleria fowleri go.usa.gov/xQkM
- Infection with the "brain-eating ameba" is rare but almost always deadly. Learn more before swimming this summer go.usa.gov/xQkM
- Limiting water going up the nose when swimming can help prevent infection from the ameba Naegleria fowleri go.usa.gov/xQkM

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/xQ9K
- Swimming in water with harmful algal blooms can cause illness. Learn more before swimming this summer www.cdc.gov/habs