



## A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

### *Healthy Swimming*

*Healthy Swimming Campaign After a Statewide Outbreak of  
Cryptosporidiosis at Recreational Water Venues — Utah, 2008–2009*  
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*[Announcer] This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.*

[Dr. Gaynes] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the *MMWR*, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

When summer approaches, people head to pools for a little fun in the sun. Pool safety includes more than just knowing how to swim; avoiding waterborne diseases is also a priority.

Michele Hlavsa is a researcher with CDC's National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases. She's joining us today to discuss ways to avoid waterborne diseases in swimming pools. Welcome to the show, Michele.

[Ms. Hlavsa] Thank you.

[Dr. Gaynes] Michele, what diseases can people get from swimming in a pool?

[Ms. Hlavsa] People can get a wide range of infections from swimming in contaminated water. They can get gastrointestinal infections, viral meningitis, ear infections, also known as swimmer's ear, but the most common infection is diarrhea.

[Dr. Gaynes] Will chlorine and other chemicals prevent people from getting sick from pool water?

[Ms. Hlavsa] Chlorine and other swimming pool disinfectants are very important in protecting swimmer health, but it's a myth that chlorine kills germs instantly. So, we need to help keep germs out of the pools in the first place.

[Dr. Gaynes] How *do* we keep germs out of the pool?

[Ms. Hlavsa] The most important step we can take is not to swim when we have diarrhea. This is important for kids and adults. Another important step is not to pee, or urinate, in the pool. Urine in the pool eats up the chlorine that we need to kill the germs. We also recommend that parents of children check diapers every 30-60 minutes and change them away from the poolside, such as at a diaper changing area or in a bathroom. We also recommend showering before getting in the water. Rinse those germs down the drain, not in the pool.

[Dr. Gaynes] So, how do we keep any germs in the pool from affecting us and causing waterborne diseases?

[Ms. Hlavsa] Don't swallow the water. Another important step is not to swim with open wounds or sores. Open wounds and sores can allow germs into the body.

[Dr. Gaynes] Michele, where can listeners get more information about avoiding waterborne diseases?

[Ms. Hlavsa] They can get more information at [www.healthyswimming.org](http://www.healthyswimming.org).

[Dr. Gaynes] Thanks, Michele. I've been talking today with CDC's Michele Hlavsa about ways to avoid waterborne diseases in swimming pools.

Remember, don't swim if you have diarrhea. In addition, swimmers should make every effort *not* to swallow pool water.

Until next time, be well. This is Dr. Robert Gaynes for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.