

Recreational Water Illnesses



What are recreational water illnesses (RWIs)?

Recreational water illnesses (RWIs) are caused by germs and chemicals found in the water we swim or play in, including swimming pools, water parks, hot tubs, splash pads, lakes, rivers, and oceans. They are spread by swallowing, breathing in mists or aerosols of, or having contact with contaminated water.



What are the symptoms?

The most common symptoms of RWIs include diarrhea (sometimes bloody), vomiting, stomach cramps, loss of appetite, weight loss, and fever. Other RWIs can cause skin, ear, eye, respiratory, or neurologic symptoms.



How can we prevent RWIs?

Each of us needs to do our part to keep the water healthy for everyone. To help protect yourself and other swimmers:

- Stay out of the water if you have diarrhea.
- Shower before and after swimming.
- Keep recreational water from getting in your mouth.
- Take children on frequent bathroom breaks.
- Change diapers frequently and away from the water.

Wash your hands and the child's hands after changing diapers.



RESOURCES



How to stay safe outdoors



MN Dept. of Health



CDC