# SHARE THE FUN... not the germs

# and make a healthy splash!

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Remember, **we share the water**—and the germs in it—**with everyone**.

## **Protect yourself**, your family, and your friends **from germs** in the water!

Pools, waterparks, hot tubs, splash pads, and spray parks are great places to have fun, be active, or just relax. But you can get sick if germs contaminate the water.

People who get into the water can carry in and spread germs.

Follow these **4 easy steps to** help keep germs out of the water and **stay healthy:**

1. **Stay out of the water if you have diarrhea.**
2. **Shower before you get in the water.**
3. **Don't pee or poop in the water.**
4. **Don't swallow the water.**

## Why is this so important?

If you get into the water when you have diarrhea, **you could make others sick**.

Most outbreaks linked to the water we swim, relax, and play in are outbreaks of diarrhea. These outbreaks are caused by germs like *Cryptosporidium* (or "Crypto" for short), norovirus, and *E. coli*.

These germs—sometimes millions at a time—can spread when someone who is sick has diarrhea in the water. Other people can get sick if they swallow the germy water—even just a mouthful.

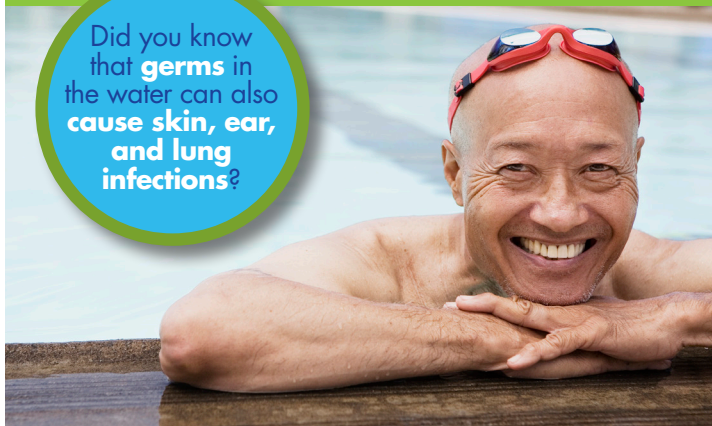
Even when it's treated properly with chemicals, **the water can still have germs**.

Pool chemicals, like chlorine or bromine, are added to the water to kill germs. But they don't work right away. If used properly, they can kill most germs within a few minutes. However, some germs, like Crypto, can live in properly treated pool water for several days.

**Let the chemicals use their power on germs**—not on your pee, poop, sweat, and dirt.

The job of pool chemicals is to kill germs. But when pee, poop, sweat, and dirt rinse off our bodies and into the pool water, the chemicals break down these other things instead of killing germs. This uses up the chemicals' power, which means there's less to kill germs. That's why it's important to **follow the 4 easy steps**.

Did you know that **germs** in the water can also **cause skin, ear, and lung infections**?



# Keep the pee, poop, sweat, and dirt out of the water!

**Without your help,** even properly treated pool water can spread germs.

## Keep the "poo" out of the pool!

Swim diapers and swim pants can hold in solid poop for a few minutes, but they are not leak proof.

Swim diapers and swim pants do **NOT** stop germs or diarrhea from getting into the water.

## Smell that "chlorine"? It's not what you think.

What you smell are actually chemicals that form when chlorine mixes with pee, poop, sweat, and dirt from swimmers' bodies. Yuck! These chemicals—not chlorine—can cause your eyes to get red and sting, make your nose run, and make you cough.

Healthy pools, waterparks, hot tubs, splash pads, and spray parks don't have a strong chemical smell.

**Shower before you get in.**
Showering for just 1 minute removes most of the dirt or anything else on your body that uses up pool chemicals.

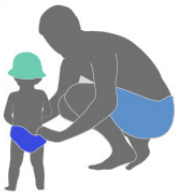
**Every hour—everyone out!**
If you're at the pool for the day, build in a break for kids and adults at least every hour.

- 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.
- Reapply sunscreen.
- Drink plenty of fluids.

**Don't poop or pee in the water.**

**Don't swallow the water.**
Avoid getting it in your mouth.

**Stay out of the water if you have diarrhea!**



## Know the pool is safer.

- **See** the bottom of the pool even at the deep end.
- **Smell** little or no chemical odor.
- **Ask** to see inspection results.
- **Use** test strips to check pool chemical levels.

Learn more at **www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming**

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