

NEWS RELEASE – 2nd in a series of Summer Safety

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Swimming Health Tips

McCook – Summer is here! This means hot, sunny days and lots of swimming! “Taking a few minutes now to review swimming health tips can help you stay safe, prevent contamination and avoid illness,” states Jamey Keen, Public Health Nurse. “The Center for Disease Control has created six steps for protection against recreational water illnesses and swimmer ear recommendations that can make your summer more enjoyable.”

The swallowing of, or having contact with, contaminated recreational water such as in hot tubs, pools, rivers, lakes, or streams can spread illnesses caused by germs such as Crypto (Cryptosporidium), E coli O157:H7, and Shigella. Generally, the local public pool is carefully maintained to keep the right level of chemicals to prevent the contamination of the pool water where home pools or natural sources of water may not be as closely, or correctly, maintained, monitored and regulated for proper chemical balances.

Recommendations from the Center for Disease Control:

Six "Steps" for Protection Against Recreational Water Illnesses (RWIs)
PLEASE don't swim when you have diarrhea...this is especially important for kids in diapers.
PLEASE don't swallow the pool water.
PLEASE practice good hygiene.
PLEASE take your kids on bathroom breaks often.
PLEASE change diapers in a bathroom and not at poolside.
PLEASE wash your child thoroughly (especially the rear end) with soap and water before swimming.

Have you had a child that went swimming and then complained of ear pain?

Swimmer's ear (also known as otitis externa) is an infection of the outer ear canal. Symptoms of swimmer's ear usually appear within a few days of swimming and include:

- Itchiness inside the ear.
- Redness and swelling of the ear.

- Pain when the infected ear is tugged or when pressure is placed on the ear.
- Pus draining from the infected ear.

Although all age groups are affected by swimmer's ear, it is more common in children and can be extremely painful.

Swimmer's ear can occur when water stays in the ear canal for long periods of time, providing the perfect environment for germs to grow and infect the skin. Germs found in pools and at other recreational water venues are one of the most common causes of swimmer's ear.

Swimmer's ear cannot be spread from one person to another.

If you think you have swimmer's ear, consult your health care provider. Swimmer's ear can be treated with antibiotic ear drops.

Additional resources can be found at the Center for Disease Control's website at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/resources/fact-sheets/#operators>

If you have questions, please contact Public Health Nurse, Jamey Keen at nurse@swhealth.ne.gov, review our web site at <http://www.swhealth.ne.gov>, call the office at 308-345-4223 or visit us at 404 West 10th Street – one block north of Arby's.

SWNPHD is on Facebook and Twitter. The health department serves Chase, Dundy, Hayes, Hitchcock, Frontier, Furnas, Perkins and Red Willow counties.

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