

Coos Health & Wellness

Together, Inspiring Healthier Communities



March 7, 2017

Optional Editorial: Summer Swimming

As summer arrives, adults and children will be enjoying swimming 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 great physical activity. Just 2.5 hours a week of physical activity like swimming provides great health benefits. However, enjoying the pool, is not risk-free.

Wearing good sunscreen and keeping children safe whether on the deck or in the water are obvious concerns, but there is a nearly invisible risk of cryptosporidium or "crypto" to be aware of too.

In 2014, Oregon saw 118 cases of cryptosporidium. By comparison, in 2016, there were more than 300 known cases in Oregon, with about 10% of those cases associated with one swimming pool.

Cryptosporidium is a parasite that can cause symptoms of watery diarrhea, stomach cramps, nausea, or vomiting that can last up to three weeks. Crypto is normally found in streams or ponds and is easily carried to a swimming pool by someone sick. Crypto can survive up to 10 days in chlorinated water. Because a normal level of chlorine does not effectively destroy crypto, swimming pool hygiene is vital.

As crypto is not easily destroyed the CDC provides the following tips to avoid spreading infection:

- Don't swim or let your kids swim if sick with diarrhea.
- If diarrhea is caused by crypto, wait until two weeks after diarrhea has stopped to go swimming.
- Don't swallow the water in which you swim.
- Rinse off in the shower before getting in the water to help remove germs.
- Take kids on bathroom breaks once an hour.
- Check diapers in a diaper-changing area and not right next to the pool.
- Don't poop in the pool.

We all have a part to help keep ourselves, our families and friends healthy in the pool this Summer.

Rick Hallmark, Environmental Health Program Manager

1975 McPherson Avenue, #1, North Bend, OR 97459
541-751-2403