



Swimming Pool Practices To Protect Your Family

(NAPSA)—Warm weather beckons for families to hit the pool—whether that is in their backyard, the community pool or a water park. But before families take the plunge, they should consider the best ways to protect themselves from getting sick from a potentially harmful source—unhealthy pool water.

According to a recent survey conducted on behalf of the Water Quality and Health Council, the majority of Americans (81 percent) believe that others are urinating in pools, while one in five (20 percent) admit doing so themselves. In addition, 83 percent of those surveyed said they were concerned with others swimming when they have diarrhea.

Below are some simple tips to help keep swimming pool use safe and healthy:

• **Shower with Soap**—Swimmers should wash with soap and water before they go swimming. Germs on the body end up in the water, so preventing germs from entering the pool is key.

• **Check for Healthy/Safe Water Levels**—Before getting in water at a public pool, water park or even your own backyard pool, check chlorine and pH levels with pool test strips. “Proper chlorine and pH levels maximize chlorine’s germ-killing power,” said Michele Hlavsa, chief of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) Healthy Swimming Program. “Testing the chlorine and pH levels before you get in the water is an important step you can take to protect your health and your family’s health.”

AquaChek Pool and Spa Test Strips allow you to test for appropriate levels of chemicals in pool water and are easy to use. Simply dip a test strip into your pool or spa/hot tub, then compare it to the color chart on the product’s label. You’ll know immediately



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how safe and clean pool water is and what chemical adjustments are needed to ensure continued cleanliness.

Backyard pool owners should test pool water at least three times a week if the pool is not being used and more often if use of the pool increases or environmental changes occur (like rain, pollen, animals, etc.). Public pool users can also pack test strips in their pool bag to check that the water is safe for swimming.

• **Curb Contamination**—Avoid swimming if you have diarrhea. You can make other people sick by spreading invisible amounts of fecal matter in the water.

• **Insist on Healthy, Safe Water**—Insist that your family and others in the pool follow basic guidelines when it comes to healthy swimming practices. Test the water at public pools and report any potential issues, such as improper chlorine levels, to a pool operator. If the pool operator does not take action, contact your local health department.

• **Stop Sipping the Water**—Don’t swallow the water you swim in, as even a small amount of contaminated water can make you sick.

Visit www.aquachek.com for more information on how to keep pool water safe and healthy.

Editor’s Note: The Swimmer Hygiene Survey, conducted on behalf of the Water Quality and Health Council, was fielded via an online Omnibus survey from April 4–8, 2012, among a nationally representative sample of 1,000 American adults 18+ years old, with a margin of error of +/- 3.1 percent.

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