

# Recreational Water Illnesses

## How to Protect Yourself and Your Family

### **Recreational Water Illnesses...**

- ...are caused by swallowing, breathing or skin contact with infectious agents.
- ...can be spread through swimming pools, spas, decorative fountains and natural bodies of water such as ponds, lakes, rivers and oceans.
- ...can be gastrointestinal illnesses with nausea, vomiting and diarrhea, or can be ear, nose, throat, skin and respiratory infections.
- ...can cause more serious illness in children, pregnant women and people with compromised immune systems.

### **Prevention Tips**

#### **In pools and other treated venues**

Children and adults should not swim if they have diarrhea.

Do not swallow pool water or get pool water in your mouth.

Shower before entering the pool (children too!).

Wash your hands after using the toilet or changing diapers.

Small children should wear tight-fitting swim diapers.

Check diapers before children enter the water.

Take children on bathroom breaks frequently.

Change children's diapers often and in a bathroom, not at poolside.

Notify the lifeguard or pool manager of any fecal ("poop") accidents.

#### **In natural bodies of water**

Swim only in posted or designated swimming areas

Do not swim in water that appears dirty, polluted or contaminated.

Do not swim near or downstream from a sewage or wastewater treatment facility, or in waters where cattle, horses or other livestock have access to the water.

### **Where can I get more information?**

Contact your local health department,  
or go to [www.deh.enr.state.nc.us/ehs/pti\\_healthyswimming.htm](http://www.deh.enr.state.nc.us/ehs/pti_healthyswimming.htm).