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## ENJOY A SAFE SWIM DURING HEALTHY AND SAFE SWIMMING WEEK AND ALL SUMMER LONG



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**Tallahassee, Fla.**—Memorial Day weekend and the start of the summer season are just around the corner, and the Florida Department of Health encourages residents and visitors to practice safe swim habits so they can make the most of their time with loved ones. This week, May 22-28, is Healthy and Safe Swimming Week, and the department reminds you that taking simple precautions can help maximize the health benefits and fun of swimming.

“As temperatures rise in Florida, swimming becomes a popular part of an ideal summer day,” said State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. Celeste Philip. “To keep those days spent in the water carefree and fun, I encourage families to take precautions to ensure the water is safe and that an adult is keeping an eye on inexperienced swimmers at all times.”

Water quality is an essential part of enjoying a safe swim, and the department works to keep residents and visitors safe while swimming by conducting routine inspections of public pools to make sure they meet sanitation and safety standards. These reports are available to the public, and you can access the latest inspection reports for public pools and water playgrounds near you by clicking [here](#). The department’s Florida Healthy Beaches program samples water from beaches along the coast and [reports](#) water quality every week.

Follow these simple steps for a healthy and safe swim experience:

- Use a high SPF sunscreen to protect yourself and your family from harmful UV rays that cause sunburn and skin cancer and reapply after swimming;
- Wear insect repellent to prevent mosquito bites and the spread of mosquito-borne illnesses;
- Shower with soap before you get in the water;
- Limit the amount of fresh water going up your nose when swimming can help prevent the infection from the amoeba *Naegleria fowleri*. The amoeba that causes the rare infection of the brain called primary amebic meningoencephalitis (PAM) is often fatal.
- Don't swallow the water you swim in;
- Stay out of the water if you have diarrhea, don't swim until you are diarrhea-free for two weeks;
- Parents should take children on bathroom breaks every 60 minutes;
- Avoid contact with algae blooms;
- Wash your hands after visiting the bathroom or changing diapers; and

- Visit your local hardware or pool-supply store and purchase pool test strips to check the chlorine and pH levels before getting into the water.

Parents should also be aware that the use of swim diapers and swim pants doesn't necessarily keep fecal bacteria out of the water, and some germs can survive days even in properly chlorinated pools.

In addition to being aware of water quality, Floridians can take simple precautions to prevent injury or drowning. By incorporating [layers of protection](#), including supervision, barriers and emergency preparedness, pool-goers can swim safely and securely.

Swimming is a fun form of exercise and a great way to get some relief from the heat. By following some simple steps, Floridians and visitors can ensure that the water they are swimming is safe and that their time with loved ones won't be interrupted by injury or illness.

### **About the Florida Department of Health**

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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