

EPI Monthly Report

Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County

[HTTP://MIAMIDADE.FLORIDAHEALTH.GOV/](http://MIAMIDADE.FLORIDAHEALTH.GOV/)



Swim Healthy: Avoiding Recreational Water Illnesses in Summer 2015

By Emily Moore, MPH

Introduction

As the weather becomes warm and school lets out for the summer, families across Florida will be heading to the beach and to the pool to enjoy time in the water. Swimming is one of the most popular pastimes in the United States, and as a form of physical activity it carries numerous health benefits. Swimming responsibly, however, means understanding how to avoid and help prevent the different diseases that can be found in the water.

Recreational Water Illnesses

Recreational Water Illnesses, or RWIs, can be the result of swimming in, swallowing, or accidentally inhaling the spray of contaminated water. These illnesses are varied, causing gastrointestinal, skin, eye, ear, respiratory, and even neurological infections. The most common culprits behind RWIs are associated with diarrheal diseases, or gastrointestinal infections. Accidentally swallowing contaminated water could result in contracting norovirus, giardia, cholera, E.coli, or shigella, to name a few. The bacteria and viruses which cause these illnesses are most often introduced into recreational swimming water when a person who is ill with diarrhea decides to swim while sick. To become ill, it is only necessary to ingest a small amount of water which has been contaminated with these germs. Even though some recreational water, such as pools, hot tubs, spa's, and water parks,

are treated with chlorine in an attempt to kill these disease-causing organisms, some germs can still survive long enough for an unsuspecting swimmer to unknowingly ingest them.

Recreational waters also include those of beaches and lakes. Local health departments are tasked with testing local, natural bodies of water to ensure that they are safe for recreational swimming and water sports. South Florida's beach water can be polluted with many things which can introduce disease-causing micro-bacteria into swimming areas. Most commonly, beach water is affected by storm drain run-off and sewage treatment malfunctions. The introduction of sewage into ocean water is of particular concern, as the bacteria, viruses, and protozoa found in human waste could sicken beach-goers.

Test the Waters

Chlorine levels and the pH balance of pools and hot tubs should be tested before allowing swimmers to enter the water. Swimming pools should contain chlorine levels of 1–3 mg/L or parts per million (ppm), and a pH of 7.2-7.8. Hot tubs, which provide a more welcoming environment for bacteria and viruses, require chlorine levels of 2–4 parts per million or ppm and a pH of 7.2-7.8. If pools or hot tubs have a very strong chemical smell, this does not mean that the waters are well treated and safe for

Inside the Issue

- 1 **Swim Healthy: Avoiding Recreational Water Illnesses in Summer**
- 4 **EDC-IS Influenza/Respiratory Illness Surveillance Report**
- 5 **Selected Reportable Diseases/Conditions in April 2015**

Epidemiology,
Disease Control &
Immunization
Services

8600 NW 17th Street
Suite 200
Miami, Florida 33126
Tel: (305) 470-5660
Fax: (305) 470-5533

EPI Monthly Report

Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County

[HTTP://MIAMIDADE.FLORIDAHEALTH.GOV/](http://MIAMIDADE.FLORIDAHEALTH.GOV/)



swimming. When chlorine mixes with urine, feces, or sweat from swimmers' bodies, the resulting chemicals produce a strong odor. Properly treated pools or hot tubs do not have a strong smell.

State, local, and tribal environmental health officials are responsible for testing beach water. Advance warning should be provided by local authorities if beach waters are found to contain dangerous levels of pollution. Notifications and advisories concerning unsafe beach can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/OST/beaches>.

Safe Swimming

The following tips can help you keep yourself, as well as fellow swimmers, safe as you enjoy the water this summer:

- Do not go swimming if you have or have recently had diarrhea

- Shower off before you swim

- Never use a pool, hot tub, or the ocean as a toilet

- Try to never swallow pool, hot tub, or ocean water

- Before swimming in a pool, make sure the water is clear all the way to the bottom, and that you can smell little to no chemical odor

- Avoid swimming in the ocean after heavy rains, as this may increase the chances of sewage runoff.

- Do not swim in areas that are near

- drainage pipes or storm drains

- Do not swim in water which contains floating trash

- Do not go swimming if you have an open wound

- If you have concerns about the safety of a pool, a hot tub, or a beach, ask to see inspections results or visit the website mentioned above

References:

- US Census Bureau. 2012 statistical abstract of the United States. Recreation and leisure activities: participation in selected sports activities, 2009.

- <http://www.cdc.gov/features/healthyswimming/index.html>

- See the following CDC infographic on the next page for more information on healthy swimming practices.

EPI Monthly Report

Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County

[HTTP://MIAMIDADE.FLORIDAHEALTH.GOV/](http://MIAMIDADE.FLORIDAHEALTH.GOV/)



Remember,
we share the
water—and the
germs in it—with
everyone.

Protect yourself, your family, and your friends from germs in the water!

Pools, waterparks, hot tubs, splash pads, and spray parks are great places to have fun, be active, or just relax. But you can get sick if germs contaminate the water.

People who get into the water can carry in and spread germs.

Follow these **4 easy steps** to help keep germs out of the water and **stay healthy**:

- 1 Stay out of the water if you have diarrhea.
- 2 Shower before you get in the water.
- 3 Don't pee or poop in the water.
- 4 Don't swallow the water.

Why is this so important?

If you get into the water when you have diarrhea, **you could make others sick.**

Most outbreaks linked to the water we swim, relax, and play in are outbreaks of diarrhea. These outbreaks are caused by germs like *Cryptosporidium* (or "Crypto" for short), norovirus, and *E. coli*.

These germs—sometimes millions at a time—can spread when someone who is sick has diarrhea in the water. Other people can get sick if they swallow the germ water—even just a mouthful.

Even when it's treated properly with chemicals, **the water can still have germs.**

Pool chemicals, like chlorine or bromine, are added to the water to kill germs. But they don't work right away. If used properly, they can kill most germs within a few minutes. However, some germs, like Crypto, can live in properly treated pool water for several days.

Let the chemicals use their power on germs—not on your pee, poop, sweat, and dirt.

The job of pool chemicals is to kill germs. But when pee, poop, sweat, and dirt rinse off our bodies and into the pool water, the chemicals break down these other things instead of killing germs. This uses up the chemicals' power, which means there's less to kill germs. That's why it's important to **follow the 4 easy steps.**

Did you know that germs in the water can also cause skin, ear, and lung infections?



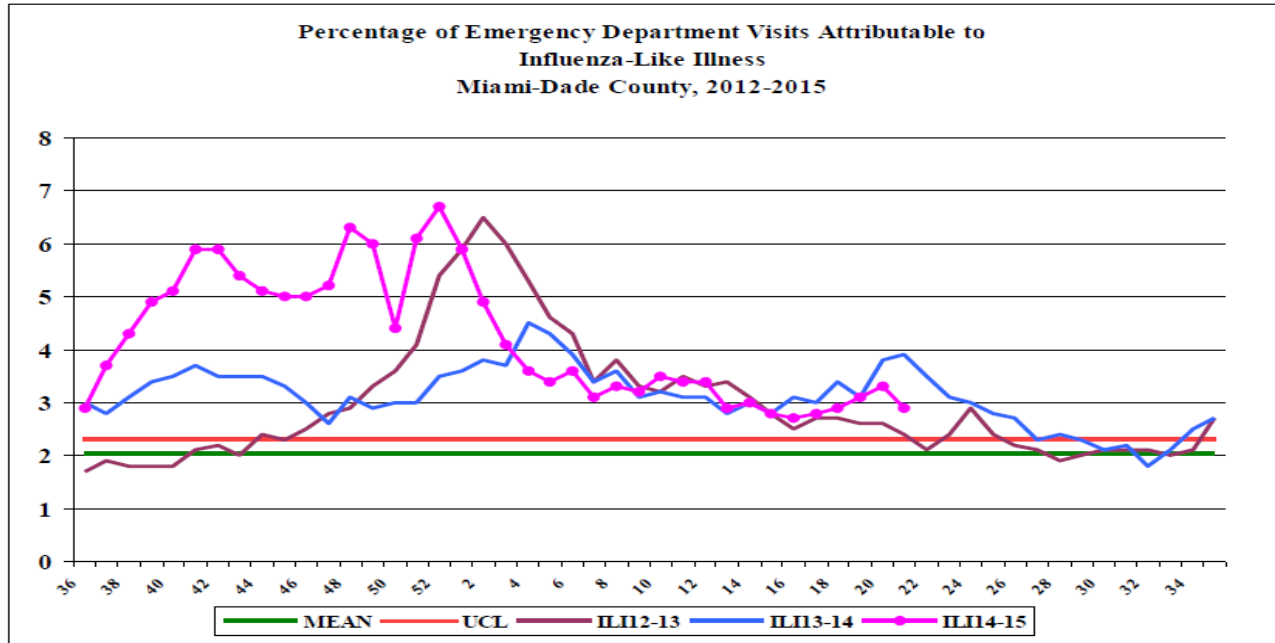


EPI Monthly Report

Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County

[HTTP://MIAMIDADE.FLORIDAHEALTH.GOV/](http://MIAMIDADE.FLORIDAHEALTH.GOV/)

Influenza-Like-Illness, All Age



During this period, there were 24,503 ED visits; among them 705 (2.9%) were ILI. At the same week of last year, 3.9% of ED visits were ILI.

PARTICIPATE IN INFLUENZA SENTINEL PROVIDER SURVEILLANCE

Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County **NEEDS** Influenza Sentinel Providers!

TO REPORT ANY DISEASE AND FOR INFORMATION CALL:
Epidemiology, Disease Control & Immunization Services

Sentinel providers are key to the success of the Florida Department of Health's Influenza Surveillance System. Data reported by sentinel providers gives a picture of the influenza virus and ILI activity in the U.S. and Florida which can be used to guide prevention and control activities, vaccine strain selection, and patient care.

- Childhood Lead Poisoning
- Prevention Program305-470-6877
- Hepatitis305-470-5536
- Immunizations or outbreaks305-470-5660
- HIV/AIDS Program305-470-6999
- STD Program305-575-5430
- Tuberculosis Program305-575-5415
- Immunization Service305-470-5660
- To make an appointment.....786-845-0550

- Providers of any specialty, in any type of practice, are eligible to be sentinel providers.
- Most providers report that it takes **less than 30 minutes a week** to compile and report data on the total number of patients seen and the number of patients seen with influenza-like illness.
- Sentinel providers can submit specimens from a subset of patients to the state laboratory for virus isolation **free of charge**.

For more information, please contact

Lakisha Thomas at 305-470-5660.

About the Epi Monthly Report

The Epi Monthly Report is a publication of the Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County: Epidemiology, Disease Control & Immunization Services. The publication serves a primary audience of physicians, nurses, and public health professionals. Articles published in the Epi Monthly Report may focus on quantitative research and analysis, program updates, field investigations, or provider education. For more information or to submit an article, please contact Emily Moore at (305) 470-6918.



EPI Monthly Report

Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County

[HTTP://MIAMIDADE.FLORIDAHEALTH.GOV/](http://MIAMIDADE.FLORIDAHEALTH.GOV/)



Miami-Dade County Monthly Report Select Reportable Disease/Conditions April 2015

| Diseases/Conditions | 2015 Current Month | 2015 Year to Date | 2014 Year to Date | 2013 Year to Date |
|--|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| HIV/AIDS | | | | |
| AIDS* | 49 | 148 | 163 | 245 |
| HIV | 133 | 537 | 424 | 472 |
| STD | | | | |
| Infectious Syphilis* | 17 | 91 | 108 | 98 |
| Chlamydia* | 845 | 3030 | 3205 | 3329 |
| Gonorrhea* | 146 | 551 | 666 | 829 |
| TB | | | | |
| Tuberculosis** | 12 | 35 | 36 | 30 |
| Epidemiology, Disease Control & Immunization Services | | | | |
| Epidemiology | | | | |
| Campylobacteriosis | 42 | 102 | 104 | 84 |
| Chikungunya Fever | 1 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| Ciguatera Poisoning | 2 | 4 | 4 | 0 |
| Cryptosporidiosis | 1 | 5 | 7 | 6 |
| Cyclosporiasis | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Dengue Fever | 0 | 4 | 6 | 10 |
| Escherichia coli, Shiga Toxin-Producing | 0 | 0 | 6 | 2 |
| E. coli, Non-O157 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Encephalitis, West Nile Virus | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Giardiasis, Acute | 10 | 61 | 69 | 84 |
| Influenza Novel Strain | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Influenza, Pediatric Death | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Legionellosis | 3 | 8 | 5 | 10 |
| Leptospirosis | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Listeriosis | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Lyme disease | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Malaria | 0 | 0 | 1 | 5 |
| Meningitis (except aseptic) | 0 | 2 | 6 | 7 |
| Meningococcal Disease | 0 | 4 | 3 | 10 |
| Salmonella serotype Typhi (Typhoid Fever) | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Salmonellosis | 50 | 140 | 130 | 124 |
| Shigellosis | 11 | 40 | 316 | 17 |
| Streptococcus pneumoniae, Drug Resistant | 0 | 0 | 28 | 39 |
| Toxoplasmosis | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Vibriosis | 0 | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| West Nile Fever | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Immunization Preventable Diseases | | | | |
| Measles | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mumps | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Pertussis | 5 | 10 | 8 | 16 |
| Rubella | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Tetanus | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Varicella | 5 | 15 | 19 | 36 |
| Hepatitis | | | | |
| Hepatitis A | 3 | 8 | 8 | 10 |
| Hepatitis B (Acute) | 0 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Lead | | | | |
| Lead Poisoning | 6 | 23 | 19 | 34 |

*Data is provisional at the county level and is subject to edit checks by state and federal agencies.

** Data on tuberculosis are provisional at the county level.