

# Protect Yourself from Recreational Water Illnesses by Remembering to Swim Your LAAPS!

**Look...** at the pool and surroundings. What should you notice?

- Clean and clear pool water; you should be able to clearly see any painted stripes and the bottom of the pool.
- Smooth pool sides; tiles should not be sticky or slippery.
- No odor; a well-chlorinated pool has little odor. A strong chemical smell indicates a maintenance problem.
- Pool equipment working; pool pumps and filtration systems make noise and you should hear them running.

**Ask...** questions of the pool staff.

- What specialized training did the staff take to prepare for working at or operating the pool?
- Are chlorine and pH levels checked at least twice per day?
- Are these levels checked during times when the pool is most heavily used?
- Are trained operation staff available during the weekends when the pool is most heavily used?
- What was the health inspector's grade for the pool after its last inspection?

**Act...** by being proactive and educating others.

- Learn about recreational water illnesses and educate other users and your pool operator.
- Urge your pool management to spread the word about RWIs to pool staff and pool users.
- Let your pool operator know that the health and well being of all swimmers is a priority for you.
- Check the pool water yourself for adequate chlorine (1-2 parts per million) and pH (7.2-7.8) levels. Pool and spa chlorine test strips are available at local home improvement stores, discount retailers and pool supply stores. If you want to practice using them at home, visit: [http://www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming/pdf/test\\_strip\\_instructions.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming/pdf/test_strip_instructions.pdf)

**Practice....** healthy swimming behaviors

- Refrain from swimming when you have diarrhea.
- Avoid swallowing pool water or even getting it in your mouth.
- Shower before swimming and wash your hands after using the toilet or changing diapers.
- Take children on bathroom breaks or check diapers often.
- Change diapers in a bathroom and not at poolside and thoroughly clean the diaper changing area.



**Safety...** is always important.

- Keep an eye on children at all times, kids can drown in seconds and in silence.
- Don't use air-filled swimming aids (such as "water wings") with children in place of life jackets or life servers.
- Protect against sunburn by using a sunscreen with at least SPF 15 and both UVA and UVB protection, and be sure to re-apply it after swimming.