

**Mission:**

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



**Rick Scott**  
Governor

**John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS**  
State Surgeon General & Secretary

**Vision:** To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

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## HEALTH OFFICIALS PROMOTE HEALTHY, SAFE SWIMMING

**PENSACOLA, FL** – The Florida Department of Health in Escambia County will observe National Healthy and Safe Swimming Week, May 18-24, by promoting simple steps that everyone can take to reduce the spread of recreational water illnesses.

Every year, thousands of Americans get sick with recreational water illnesses (RWIs), which are caused by germs found in places where people swim. The most common locations for contracting or spreading RWIs are swimming pools, water parks, water play areas, hot tubs, rivers, lakes, and open bodies of water such as bayous, bays, and the Gulf of Mexico. Swallowing even a small amount of contaminated recreational water can make you sick.

RWIs can include ear, respiratory, eye, skin, wound, and gastrointestinal infections. A single swimmer with a diarrhea-causing illness can quickly contaminate the water of a large swimming pool or a water park. RWIs are preventable, but everyone needs to take an active role in protecting themselves and other swimmers.

Take these simple steps to help prevent the spread of germs that cause RWIs:

- Don't swim when you have diarrhea.
- Don't swallow pool or recreational water.
- Don't swim when you have an open wound or broken skin.
- Practice good personal hygiene.
- Shower before entering a pool or other recreational water venue.
- Wash your hands after using the toilet or changing a diaper.
- Check diapers or take children to the restroom every 30-60 minutes and only change diapers in restrooms. Changing diapers pool-side can spread germs in and around the pool.

Following healthy swimming steps will help protect you, your family, and other swimmers from RWIs. For more information on RWIs, visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/rwi/index.html>.

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The Florida Department of Health works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

Follow us on Twitter at @HealthyFla and on Facebook. For more information about the Florida Department of Health in Escambia County, visit [www.escambiahealth.com](http://www.escambiahealth.com).