

HEALTH ADVISORY

Naegleria

Naegleria is a big name for a very tiny parasite (ameba) that is usually found in fresh water bodies such as lakes and ponds.



NAEGLERIA FOWLERI

Naegleria fowleri causes an infection that develops when these parasites enter the human body through the nose, making their way to the brain.

PAM

This infection causes a rare, but life threatening disease called primary amoebic meningoencephalitis (PAM). Symptoms of PAM can start as quickly as 1 to 14 days after infection. Symptoms include headache, fever, nausea, vomiting and stiff neck.

THE DISEASE MOVES VERY QUICKLY

As the disease moves into the brain, it causes swelling which leads to confusion, lack of attention, loss of balance, seizure and hallucinations. This disease usually results in death within 3 to 7 days.

SAFEST WAY TO PREVENT INFECTION

Do not swim in warm, standing water, such as lakes, ponds, poorly maintained swimming pools, storm water holding areas or in places that are posted "No Swimming." Bacteria and other harmful organisms thrive in warm, standing water.

CLOSING YOUR NOSTRILS

Wear nose clips, hold your nose shut or keep your head out of the water when swimming, jumping or diving in any freshwater. Closing your nostrils may reduce your chance of becoming infected.

RISK INCREASES DURING HOT SUMMER MONTHS

Avoid swimming or jumping into these bodies of fresh water during the hot summer months when the water is warm and the water levels are low. As temperatures rise so does your chance of becoming infected.

PARASITE LIVES IN SAND AND SILT

Do not dig or stir up the sand and silt while swimming in shallow water.

SAFER SWIMMING

This infection cannot be spread from person to person or contracted from a properly maintained swimming pool.

GET MORE FACTS

Visit: www.healthy.arkansas.gov or search for keywords *Naegleria fowleri* at: www.cdc.gov. You can also find out more by calling your local county health department.

Seek immediate medical attention if you have any of these symptoms after swimming in freshwater:

HEADACHE

FEVER

NAUSEA

VOMITING

STIFF NECK

