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DOH-PASCO CAUTIONS PUBLIC ABOUT WATERBORNE ILLNESS CRYPTO



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With the temperatures continuing to rise, the Florida Department of Health in Pasco County (DOH-Pasco) is asking the public to take caution in swimming pools and water playgrounds because of the risk of *Cryptosporidium* (also known as “Crypto”). Crypto is not easily killed by chlorine and can last up to 10 days in water.

Cryptosporidiosis, a parasitic infection that can be linked to swimming pools and water playgrounds, is often spread when people come into contact with hands, objects, or water contaminated with diarrhea, including chlorinated swimming pools. Crypto can be spread throughout households and in child care facilities where there is poor hygiene after changing diapers.

Crypto can cause a person to be sick for up to three weeks with watery diarrhea, stomach cramps, nausea, vomiting, a slight fever, and in some cases, dehydration.

In 2014, Pasco County had 142 reported cases of Crypto. As of mid-June this year, there have been 10 cases reported, compared to 12 cases reported in all of 2018. DOH-Pasco continues to work with its community partners to educate the public on the seriousness of Crypto. Now that pool season is in full swing, Pasco County residents are reminded to take the proper precautions to help prevent the spread of this disease.

Residents and visitors are advised to practice proper hand hygiene and avoid swimming pools, water playgrounds and water parks when ill with diarrhea. Those who are sick with a diarrheal illness should wait at least two weeks after they have recovered before visiting a public area where they will be exposed to recreational water.

Parents and caregivers should also follow these steps to avoid Crypto:

- Take children on frequent bathroom breaks and check diapers often.
- Change diapers in a bathroom and not at the poolside, as germs can spread to surfaces or objects in and around the pool and spread illness.
- Shower before entering the water.
- Wash your hands with soap and water after changing a child’s diaper.

Those who develop symptoms of Crypto and other gastrointestinal illnesses should contact their health care provider.

To learn more about Cryptosporidium, go to <http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/crypto/>.

About the Florida Department of Health

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