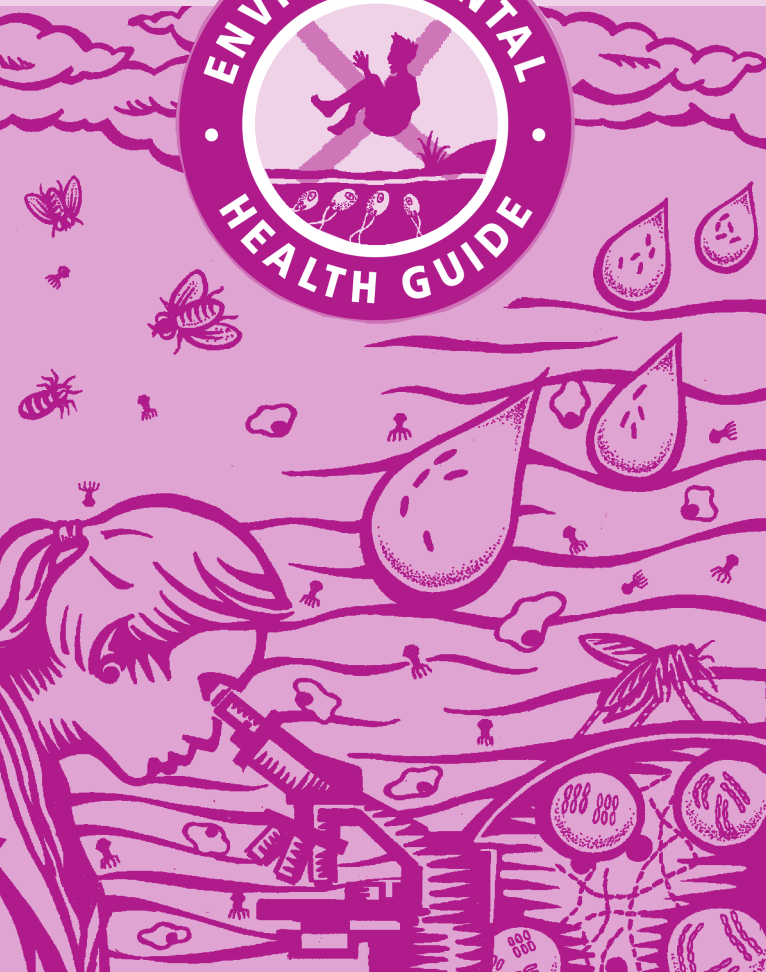
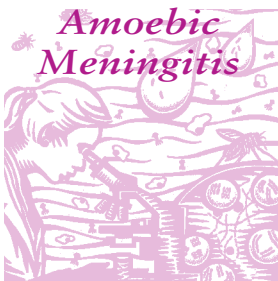


# *Amoebic Meningitis*





## *What is Amoebic Meningitis?*

*Amoebic meningitis is a disease that causes inflammation and eventual destruction*

*of the brain and brain linings. It is caused by a single-celled amoeba that lives in fresh water.*

*The amoeba, Naegleria fowleri, can survive in soil for a long time and still reactivate when put in fresh water.*

This rare and fatal water-borne disease was discovered at the Adelaide Children's Hospital in the 1960s. Since then 15 countries in Asia, Europe, North and South America have detected *Naegleria fowleri*.

Most victims have been children who didn't know the dangers of swimming in or playing with unclean water. Taking the simple precautions listed below will help you protect them.

## *Symptoms of Amoebic Meningitis*

The following symptoms are usually recorded within three to seven days of infection and result in death:

- *severe and persistent headache*
- *sore throat*
- *nausea*
- *vomiting*
- *high fever*
- *sleepiness*



## *How do you get it?*

Amoebic meningitis occurs only if water containing the amoebae goes up the nose. The amoebae can then make their way up the nerves to the brain.

## *When do you get it?*

When a number of conditions occur at the same time:

- *if the amoebae are present in the water*
- *if they get a chance to multiply*
- *if water gets up your nose*

## *Where do you get it?*

*Naegleria fowleri* thrive in water temperatures between 28° and 40°C. You can get amoebic meningitis from:

- ✘ *unchlorinated or incorrectly chlorinated fresh water (drinking water, bore water, swimming pools, spas, showers, baths, garden hoses),*
- ✘ *warm inland waters (dams, lakes, geothermal water, or waterholes).*
- ✘ *poorly maintained swimming pools and spas vulnerable to the multiplication of amoebae and thus dangerous.*
- ✘ *water piped above ground for long distances, left in garden hoses or even in swimming pools and spas may reach high temperatures and, therefore, may allow *Naegleria fowleri* to multiply.*

Sea water is safe as well as salty estuaries with two percent salt.



## *To prevent infection*

- ✓ *Do not play with or drink directly from hoses and sprinklers.*
- ✓ *Let bath and shower taps run for a few minutes to flush out the pipes.*
- ✓ *Swim in and play with safe water only. Stay out of dirty pools, waterholes, dams, swimming pools, spas, etc.*
- ✓ *Disinfect your swimming pool water and any other water that is not from the town supply. Chlorine is the most effective way to continually disinfect water as it kills all stages of Naegleria fowleri.*
- ✓ *Keep wading pools clean by emptying, scrubbing and allowing them to dry in the sun after each use.*
- ✓ *Swim in sea water as you cannot get amoebic meningitis from water containing more than two per cent salt.*
- ✓ *If you are unsure how clean bathing water is, don't jump in or 'duck dive'; walk or lower yourself in. Jumping in is risky.*

*Water should be clean,  
cool and chlorinated.*



*Remember -  
to stop amoebic  
meningitis infection*

Do not play with garden hoses and sprinklers.



Let bath and shower taps run for a few minutes.



Keep wading pools clean and only  
use the water once.



Keep your swimming pool or spa clean.



Test your swimming pool or spa at least every day.



Stay out of hazardous water -  
dirty pools, spas, waterholes, dams, etc.



If you do come in contact with unsafe water,  
walk or lower yourself in.

*Don't allow water to be  
forced up your nose.*



*Other leaflets available*

How Safe is Recreational Water?

How Safe is Your Drinking Water?

Is the Water in Your Rainwater Tank Safe to Drink?

Pool Sense At Home

Put A Fence Between Your Child And Your Pool.

*Further information*

For further information contact your local  
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