

Playing Safe in Natural Waters

How to Protect Yourself from *Naegleria fowleri* When you Go Swimming

Naegleria fowleri is a parasitic amoeba commonly found in warm freshwater (i.e. lakes, rivers and hot springs). Infection can happen during recreational activities in natural waters and causes Primary Amoebic Meningoencephalitis (PAM), a brain infection that leads to the destruction of brain tissue. Symptoms include headache, fever, nausea, vomiting and stiff neck.

Infection is EXTREMELY rare, but can be treated if detected early. If you plan on participating in recreational activities in warm natural waters, you can reduce your risk by:

- Holding nose shut or wearing nose plugs when jumping or diving.
- Avoiding swimming or diving.
- Avoid stirring up sediment in shallow areas.