



## DON'T LET SWIMMING MAKE YOU SICK

### PREVENTING WATERBORNE ILLNESS IN KITSAP WATERS

#### WHAT IS WATERBORNE ILLNESS?

Toxic algae, bacteria, viruses, or parasites in the water can make you sick.

#### REDUCING YOUR RISK

- Avoid areas with algae, large number of swimmers, aquatic plants, snails, and waterfowl.
- Don't swim if you're sick.
- Use good hygiene:
  - Avoid ingesting lake or stream water.
  - Don't let children who are not toilet trained play in the water.
  - Wash your hands with soap and water after using the toilet, changing diapers, and before handling food.
- After swimming, immediately shower and vigorously towel dry.



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#### SWIMMER'S ITCH

When a small waterborne parasite burrows under the skin of a swimmer, the result is an intense itching rash called swimmer's itch.

#### Treatment:

- Relieve itching with calamine lotion or an antihistamine, such as Benadryl.
- Consult your doctor if the rash continues or if white bumps or pus appear; rash rarely requires medical attention.

### CYANOBACTERIA / BLUE-GREEN ALGAE

When cyanobacteria organisms reproduce rapidly in fresh water the lake can become discolored with a “bloom.”

#### Blooms:

- Are most common in the summer and fall
- May appear bright green, blue, brown or red-green
- May be toxic and cause serious illness
- May leave toxins in the water even after the bloom has subsided

#### Signs of toxic cyanobacteria:

- Sudden sickness or death of pets or livestock
- Large amount of dead fish in lake
- Skin rash after being in the water

#### Symptoms of toxic cyanobacteria poisoning:

- Signs can appear within 15 minutes or even hours or days. Seek medical care immediately for the following:
  - Numbness of the lips
  - Tingling in the fingers and toes
  - Dizziness
- In pets or livestock:
  - Weakness, staggering
  - Difficulty breathing
  - Dizziness

### REPORT ANY ILLNESS OR CYANOBACTERIA BLOOM!

Help keep our community a safe place. 360-728-2235 or visit our website. You can also sign up to receive water quality alerts.

