5 Things to know About Healthy Swimming in Montana

1. Hazards are in the water.
Protozoans like Cryptosporidium and Giardia can be found in natural water or get introduced by an ill swimmer. In 2016, nearly 200 ill people were infected in Montana.

Drowning can occur around water.

2. Montanans get sick and injured.
In 2015, 43% of those infected with Cryptosporidium and 59% of those infected with Giardia reported recreational water use prior illness. Nearly 70% of them had contact to natural waters, like lakes and rivers and 23% swam in pool or hot tubs. More than 28% of the illnesses occurred in July.

In 2015, 14 people died due to drowning in Montana, most of those occurred in natural water.

3. Challenges.
Protozoans can form cysts which can be resistant to chlorine and and may remain infective for 2-6 months in a moist environment.

Improperly secured or operated pools can lead to accidents.

4. 788 Pool & Spa Inspections
In 2016, 788 pools and spas were inspected in Montana by environmental health specialists to make sure the chemical levels are appropriate and physical barriers exist to make sure the pools are safe to use.

5. Swim smart!
Only swim when you are healthy, so others don’t get sick and shower before entering the pool.

Supervise young children around water at all times.