

Think Healthy. Swim Healthy.

Practice Healthy Beach Habits!

Maine is famous for its pristine beaches and healthy swimming waters. Here are some things you can do to help keep it that way!

How to help prevent water-related illnesses:

- Avoid swallowing beach-water and try not to let any get in your mouth.
- Take your kids on bathroom breaks often—sometimes “I have to go” means it’s already too late!
- Change diapers away from the water’s edge—in a bathroom if possible—and dispose of in a sanitary manner; germs can spread if dirty diapers are not sealed properly.
- Wash your hands with soap and water or sanitary-wipes after using the bathroom or cleaning children. Liquid hand sanitizers in many public restrooms are very effective.
- Don’t swim if you have diarrhea or feel like you may vomit.
- Leave the water immediately if there is a vomiting or diarrhea incident, and notify a lifeguard if one is present.
- Waterfowl and other animals are attracted by trash—please dispose of refuse properly.
- Do not feed the gulls, other birds or wildlife on the beach.
- Dogs may not be allowed at some beaches. Please check before you go.
- If you bring a pet onto the beach, dispose of its waste properly (bring small plastic bags with you)
- Share the knowledge—many people are not aware that beach health risks exist!

Thank You.



www.MaineHealthyBeaches.org

To report an illness:
207-287-8016 or 1-800-821-5821

- Gathering extensive information on the individual beaches throughout Maine
- Identifying and promoting healthy practices for beachgoers
- Surveying beachgoers to determine levels of public awareness and rates of water-related illness incidence
- Development and implementation of sampling and detection methodologies for lake, pond and coastal beach-water
- Public education programs and notification plans

The State of Maine, dozens of coastal and inland beach communities and Maine beachgoers are working together to support healthy recreational waters. Maine's swimming waters are normally very healthy. The Maine Healthy Beaches program has been established to ensure that they remain safe and clean, and that if conditions do become unhealthy the public is notified. The Healthy Beaches program will notify the lake or coastal beach is poor. The program has established a unified beach-water quality monitoring and education system that includes:

The Maine Healthy Beaches Program

You remembered the sunscreen.

The beach umbrella.
Your hat and sunglasses.
What else do you need to remember for healthy swimming at the beach?

Think about it.

You share the water with everyone else at the beach. If a baby has a leaky diaper, or someone has diarrhea, that water can become contaminated... and swallowing it or coming into contact with it can make you sick.



- Improperly disposed of diapers
- Children not properly cleaned after using the bathroom
- A vomiting or fecal accident in the water
- Swimmers with diarrhea
- Animal feces
- Malfunctioning septic systems in the vicinity
- Nearby boat moorings or marinas releasing sewage into the water
- Storm water run-off

Water at Maine's lakes, ponds and coastal swimming beaches can become contaminated by fecal matter which carries harmful bacteria and viruses. This unsanitary condition can be due to several possible causes:

About Water-Related Illnesses
Skin rashes, ear and eye infections, stomachache, diarrhea and flu-like symptoms can be caused by bacteria and viruses in our swimming water. Children and adults can contract these illnesses if they accidentally swallow or come in contact with water at the beach that has become contaminated.

Stay informed. Stay safe. Stay healthy.



Have a Safe and Healthy Summer!

For more information, visit our Web site:
www.MaineHealthyBeaches.org

Or link to these other online resources:
www.maine.gov/dep/blwq/beach.htm
www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming
www.epa.gov/ost/beaches

For Coastal Swim Beach advisory information call 800-232-4733

To contact the Maine Healthy Beaches program:

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Maine's inland and coastal beaches are known worldwide for their natural, pristine beauty and of course, great swimming! Our beaches are wonderful places for families to enjoy summer days in Maine, but when lakes, ponds and coastal beaches become crowded, potential health risks exist. This guide will help you learn about the risks and what everyone can do to help make sure our beautiful beaches stay safe and clean.

Help Keep Maine Beaches Healthy



A Guide to Safer Swimming in Maine

