



**DALLAS COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION**

ZACHARY THOMPSON
DIRECTOR

DR. JOHN CARLO
MEDICAL DIRECTOR

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Contact: Jacqueline M. Bell – 214-819-6329 **or** **Zachary Thompson** – 214-819-2101
214-677-7880 (mobile) 214-755-9299 (mobile)

DCHHS Investigating Cases of Crypto in Area Spray Parks

July 25, 2008 (Dallas) — Dallas County Health and Human Services has detected *Cryptosporidium* in a local recreational water facility. DCHHS is working with the City of Dallas to implement hyperchlorination of pools when needed to reduce the risk to the public's health.

"DCHHS is actively involved in the investigation of any suspected diarrhal illnesses associated with recreational water facilities in Dallas County," said Zachary Thompson, DCHHS Director. "We will hold a meeting with the cities next week to discuss proper sanitation methods for spray parks to protect the health of residents," Thompson continued.

Cryptosporidiosis, or "crypto", is a diarrheal illness caused by microscopic parasites called *Cryptosporidium*. Its symptoms include loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea (which can last 1-2 weeks). There have been 16 cases of crypto reported in Dallas County this year, 5 of which are associated with the current lake out- break. DCHHS is also investigating several potential cases associated with local spray parks.

"Although there is no overall increased number of crypto cases occurring in our county yet this year (in comparison to the same months last year), our community is at risk of seeing outbreaks of infections occurring from water facilities within Dallas if appropriate precautions are not undertaken," said Dr. Wendy Chung, DCHHS Chief Epidemiologist.

An individual becomes infected with Crypto by ingesting contaminated food or water or having contact with other pools kills most germs that can cause RWIs in less than an hour. However, germs such as Crypto can survive for days in a properly disinfected pool. DCHHS offers the following safeguards to prevent RWIs:

For the general public:

- Don't swim when you have diarrhea.
- Don't swallow the pool water.
- Practice good hygiene. Take a shower before swimming and wash your hands.

For pool operators:

- Pool staff with diarrhea should not enter the pool while experiencing symptoms, and for 2 weeks after resolution of diarrhea.



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- If a suspected case of diarrheal illness associated with your pools, consider initiation of hyperchlorination protocols outlined by the CDC.

Pool operators are asked to report cases of diarrheal illness possibly linked to use of their recreational water facility to DCHHS. Anyone experiencing symptoms should seek medical attention and report the information to DCHHS at (214) 819-2004. For more information go to www.cdc.gov