



boy's guide books

inspire – motivate – contribute

www.boysguidebooks.com



Peeing in the Pool

Relieving oneself whilst swimming, floating, or standing in a pool of chlorinated water is a time-honored tradition for young and old alike. Of more than 2,400 respondents to the Pee Pool Poll¹, 54% said they pee in private swimming pools and 82% pee in public swimming pools.

Why pee in the pool? You have to admit it's a hassle to get out of the water, find a towel, dry off, and shuffle over to the men's room. And, frankly, many people like peeing in the pool because they say it feels good. But, no matter, the chlorine will take care of it, right?

Well, maybe it does and maybe it doesn't. So, you ask, just what exactly is in pool water? Here's the good: chlorine to kill the germs and chemicals to control the pH. Here's the bad: outside debris (dirt, bugs, and bird droppings) and material from swimmers' bodies (sweat, saliva, mucous, and suntan oil). Here's the ugly: urine and human feces. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta (CDC), people on average have about 0.14 grams of feces (spelled p-o-o-p) on their butts that washes off and contaminates the water when they're swimming.

Sometimes mixed in with this brew of bugs, sweat, spit, snot, pee, and poop is cryptosporidium, a parasite that causes diarrhea. Chlorine kills most organisms in a fraction of a second, but it takes up to 7 days to kill cryptosporidium. A few other swimming partners that give chlorine a run for the money are *Escherichia coli* (bacterium), *Giardia lamblia* (parasite), and *Shigella* (bacterium), none of which are good for you.

So, here's the poop on pool water: chlorine kills germs, but it takes time, and it doesn't kill everything. Before going in, make sure the water looks clean, clear, and blue; the sides of the pool are not slippery or sticky; and there is no strong smell of chlorine. A very strong chlorine-like smell can mean that chloramines are present. Chloramines are chemicals made up of chlorine mixed with lotions, sweat, saliva, mucous, urine, and feces.

Peeing in the Pool Dos and Don'ts

- Don't pee in swimming pools, no matter how tempting it is.
- Don't swallow pool water because, well, you know why.
- Pee before going in the water and take frequent bathroom breaks. (And don't forget to wear flip-flops to the bathroom lest you stand barefoot in other's urine.)
- Shower before swimming.
- Take personal responsibility for keeping the pool clean.

CONSIDER THIS: If you were meant to pee in the pool, there would be a special "peeing section."

AND THIS: Peeing in a lake or the ocean is okay as long as you're discreet. After all, that's where fish go.

Want more bad habits? www.boysguidebooks.com/badhabits.html

Can you spare 10 seconds? www.theboysguide.com/bhpoll.html

ⁱ Statistics used with the permission of Mister Poll.