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DOH-Charlotte Updates Residents on *Naegleria fowleri*

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Charlotte County, Fla. — The Florida Department of Health in Charlotte County (DOH-Charlotte) is providing an [update](#) on the detected case of *Naegleria fowleri* in Charlotte County. Lab results have identified a location where the amoeba may have been contracted. The results only detected the amoeba at a private residence at the time of testing. DOH-Charlotte, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), public utilities, and community partners continue to coordinate and have implemented protective measures to neutralize any potential risk.

At this time, there is no indication that the amoeba poses any further threat to the community. Investigations will continue to be conducted to further ensure water safety.

[Naegleria fowleri](#) is a microscopic single-celled living amoeba. In rare situations, the amoeba can cause an infection of the brain called [primary amebic meningoencephalitis \(PAM\)](#). Infection with *Naegleria fowleri* is **RARE** and can only happen when water contaminated with amoebae enters the body through the nose. You **CANNOT** be infected by drinking tap water.

As always, residents should follow these best practice safety measures:

- If your home has been vacant for an extended amount of time, [flush your water](#) system.
- When making sinus rinse solutions, use **ONLY** distilled or sterile water. Tap water should be boiled for at least 1 minute and cooled before sinus rinsing.
- **DO NOT** allow water to go up your nose or sniff water into your nose when bathing, showering, washing your face, or swimming in small hard plastic/blow-up pools.
- **DO NOT** jump into or put your head under bathing water (bathtubs, small plastic or inflatable pools) – walk or lower yourself in.
- Keep small plastic or inflatable pools clean by emptying, scrubbing, and allowing them to dry after each use.
- Keep your swimming pool adequately disinfected with chlorine before and during use.
- **DO NOT** allow children to play unsupervised with hoses or sprinklers, as they may accidentally squirt water up their nose. Avoid slip-n-slides or other activities where it is difficult to prevent water going up the nose or consider using nasal clips for added protection.

DOH-Charlotte is providing nasal clips and educational materials at the location below while supplies last:

Florida Department of Health in Charlotte County
1100 Loveland Blvd,
Port Charlotte, FL 33980

It is essential to seek medical attention right away if you experience any of the following symptoms after a nasal water exposure, such as a sinus rinse: headache, fever, nausea, disorientation, vomiting, stiff neck, seizures, loss of balance, or hallucinations.

For more information on this amoeba, please visit the [CDC's website](#).

About the Florida Department of Health

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