

EXPOSURE TO SEWAGE CAN MAKE YOU SICK. LEARN HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF.

WHAT IS SEWAGE AND WHY SHOULD YOU PROTECT YOURSELF FROM IT?

Sewage is mainly water containing poop and pee (urine) along with toilet paper or wipes that flows through a sewer system or septic tank.

Poop may contain harmful germs (bacteria and viruses), intestinal worms, and parasites. Sewage treatment reduces the water content and removes materials but does not kill or remove all of the germs, parasites or worms.

HOW CAN YOU BE EXPOSED TO SEWAGE?

Sewage can run out into the yard or land from

- Wastewater backing up from underground sewer pipes.
- Septic tank build up or heavy rains.
- Broken sewer systems from storms or flooding.

You can then be exposed to sewage if

- You put your hands in or close to your mouth when eating, drinking and smoking.
- You wipe your face with dirty hands or gloves.
- Sewage gets into cuts, scratches or wounds.
- You walk in sewage that has run out onto the ground.

HOW CAN YOU GET SICK FROM SEWAGE?

Sewage contains germs like bacteria and viruses as well as parasites and worms that can cause stomach and intestine or liver illness.

- Germs and parasites may cause diarrhea, fever, cramps, nausea, vomiting, headache, weakness or loss of appetite.
- Hepatitis A can cause liver disease; symptoms may include feeling tired, having pale poop, and having yellow eyes and skin.
- Roundworms cause coughing, trouble breathing or pain in your belly and blocked intestines.
- Hookworms can cause a rash, stomach pain, diarrhea, loss of appetite, tiredness and anemia.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM RAW SEWAGE:



DO NOT touch your nose, mouth, eyes or ears with your hands, unless you just washed them.



DO NOT let sewage get into open cuts, sores or wounds.



DO NOT keep dirty work clothes with your other clothes.



DO NOT walk barefoot in the yard where the soil may be contaminated with poop.



Wash your hands well with clean water and soap before you eat or smoke, after using the toilet, and after working.



Keep your fingernails short. Use a stiff soapy brush to clean under your nails.



Wear waterproof gloves if you handle wastewater, sludge or grit; or if you clean pumps or screens.



Change out of any dirty clothes and wash as thoroughly as possible with your current resources.



Talk to your doctor or nurse about any symptoms of being sick from sewage.



Seek appropriate treatment from your doctor if diagnosed with a bacterial or viral illness, parasite or worm.



Keep up to date on all your shots. Hepatitis A shots are good to have.

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