



Growing Healthy Communities

For immediate release:

Date: July 31, 2025

From: Public Information Officer Lori Beatley

Be Aware of Swimmer's Itch

Some lakes in Plumas County can cause a skin rash called cercarial dermatitis, also known as swimmer's itch. This happens when tiny parasites in the water get into your skin. These parasites usually live in birds and some mammals that spend time in lakes. When people swim in the water, the parasites can dig into the skin and cause an allergic reaction. Swimmer's itch is not passed from person to person.

Symptoms of Swimmer's Itch:

- Tingling, burning, or itching skin
- Small red bumps or pimples
- Small blisters

These symptoms can show up within minutes or up to a few days after swimming.

How to Treat It:

You can use the following treatments to help relieve itching:

- Anti-itch ointment or cream (like hydrocortisone)
- Cool, wet cloths on the rash
- Oatmeal baths

Try not to scratch the rash—scratching may cause an infection. Call your doctor if the rash doesn't go away.

How to Prevent Swimmer's Itch:

- Don't swim in shallow water with a lot of weeds or snails, or where many ducks or geese are nearby.
- Swim in deeper water if you know how to swim well.
- Dry off with a towel right after swimming or wading.
- Take a shower as soon as you can.
- Don't feed birds near swimming areas—it can attract more of them.

By taking these steps, you can lower your risk of getting swimmer's itch and enjoy a safer swim in Plumas County lakes.

For more information on swimmer's itch please contact Plumas County Public Health Clinic at (530) 283 6330 or (800) 801-6330.



530-283-6330 OFFICE
530-283-6110 FAX



270 County Hospital Rd, Suite 111
Quincy, California 95971



<http://countyofplumas.com/publichealth>