

As summer arrives, CDC offers pool chemical safety tips

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Injuries can occur when people ignore instructions or get careless with these hazardous products.

(HealthDay)—Before diving into summer, keep in mind that a new study found that nearly 5,000 pool chemical-related injuries were treated in U.S. hospital emergency rooms in 2012.

Children and teens suffered nearly half of these injuries and more than one-third occurred at home, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention researchers found. Not surprisingly, most occurred between Memorial Day and Labor Day, with nearly half of these incidents happening over a weekend.

"Chemicals are added to the water in pools to stop germs from spreading. But they need to be handled and stored safely to avoid serious injuries," Michele Hlavsa, chief of CDC's Healthy Swimming Program, said in an agency news release.

The three most common swimming pool chemical injuries are respiratory problems (from breathing in fumes), [eye injuries](#) and skin injuries, according to the CDC.

To mark Recreational Water Illness and Injury Prevention Week, May 19 to May 25, the CDC offers a number of pool chemical safety tips for pool owners and operators:

- Read and follow directions on pool chemical labels.
- Use safety equipment, such as goggles and masks, when handling pool chemicals.
- Store chemicals safely and securely to protect people and animals from accidental exposure.
- Make sure young children are kept away from the area where chemicals are being handled.
- Never mix different pool chemicals, especially chlorine products with acid.
- Do not pre-dissolve pool chemicals unless the product label specifically instructs you to do so.
- Pool chemicals should be added to water. Do not add water to pool chemicals, the CDC warned in the news release.

While pool chemicals help keep swimming water safe, it's also important that people try to keep germs out of the water in the first place. Ways to do this include not going in a pool when you have diarrhea and being sure to take children for bathroom breaks, the experts noted.

In addition, you can help protect yourself from illness by avoiding swallowing pool [water](#), the CDC said.

More information: The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission offers [pool and spa safety tips](#).

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