Laura Suppes
Assistant Professor,
Watershed Institute

Assessment of Swimmer Behaviors on Pool Water Ingestion

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Enteric pathogens in pool water can be unintentionally ingested during swimming, increasing the likelihood of acute gastrointestinal illness (AGI). Outbreak data indicate AGI cases are more likely to submerge heads in pool water than non-cases, but a true association is unknown since outbreak data are self-reported and prone to bias. In this study, head submersion frequency and duration were observed and analyzed for associations with pool water ingestion. Results indicate greater frequency and duration of head submersion were not associated with ingestion, but frequency of splashes to the face and being <18 were. Expanding surveys to include questions on frequency of splashes to the face is recommended.