

and drink cannot be excluded, although these would not explain the confinement of cases to young males.

The outdoor spa pool was being treated with hydrogen peroxide solution. Hydrogen peroxide used with ultraviolet (UV) light inhibits microbial growth, but is unlikely to provide adequate disinfection with respect to contamination with the hepatitis A virus. The use of UV-hydrogen peroxide systems is not allowed in

public pools in Victoria due to poor performance in trials.¹ A study of a multistate outbreak of hepatitis A in the United States of America, found it to be linked to a public swimming pool.² In this study, cases were found to be more likely than non-cases to have swum in the spa pool than the swimming pool. Cases were also more likely to have swum for more than one hour and to have put their heads under water. Our findings support the conclusion from this study that

recreational pools may serve as a mode of transmission of hepatitis A virus, particularly in children.

References

1. Broadbent C. Guidance on water quality for heated spas. *National Environmental Health Forum Monographs, Water Series No 2*. Adelaide: South Australian Health Commission; 1996
2. Mahoney FJ, Farley TA, Kelso KY, Wilson SA, Horan JM, McFarland LM. An outbreak of hepatitis A associated with swimming in a public pool. *J Infect Dis* 1992; 165(4):613-8

Gastroenteritis outbreak, New South Wales

An increase in the number of reports of gastroenteritis cases received by the New South Wales Health Department occurred in mid-December. As of 17 December 45 people, mainly in the Sydney area, had developed

gastroenteritis after consuming pipis. Pipis are a type of small shellfish harvested by commercial fishermen from regional beaches of New South Wales. The Department is investigating the cause of the outbreak. The sale of

pipis in the Sydney area has been suspended, and a recommendation that pipis be thoroughly cooked inside before eating, has been issued.

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