



# Iowa Department of Public Health

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## Breastfeeding at Swimming Pools

Each year the Iowa Swimming Pool and Spa program receives several questions about breastfeeding at public swimming pools. The questions often focus on any risks to the public such as the potential for disease transmission through breast milk.

The CDC addresses [Breastfeeding in Pools & Hot Tubs/Spa](#) on their website. They specifically note that CDC is not aware of any risks to other swimmers related to breastfeeding in pools or hot tubs.

The potential risks noted by CDC are not specifically associated with breastfeeding but rather are associated with the baby itself being in a public swimming pool or hot tub/spa including:

- A baby's immune system is not as developed so the baby may be more at risk to germs from others that may be in the pool.
- A baby may swallow too much water causing hyponatremia.
- A baby cannot control their body temperature as well as older children and adults, so they are at greater risk of hypothermia or hyperthermia.

[Iowa Code 135.30A](#) protects the right of a woman to breast-feed the woman's own child in any public place where the woman's presence is otherwise authorized.

A woman should not be prevented from breastfeeding her child simply because she is in a public area. A facility should not interfere with a woman breastfeeding their child by asking them to move to a different area, leave the facility, or otherwise require them to conceal or cover up while breastfeeding.

In 2011 the [Surgeon General](#) released a report calling for the support of breastfeeding noting that for nearly all infants, breastfeeding is the best source of infant nutrition and immunologic protection, and it provides remarkable health benefits to mothers as well.

The [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) notes that extensive research documents diverse and compelling advantages for infants, mothers, families, and society from breastfeeding and use of human milk for infant feeding.

Breastfeeding Rates in Iowa have continued to increase. Please refer to the Iowa Department of Public Health for additional information on [Breastfeeding Promotion and Support](#).

For additional information, please contact John Kelly at 515-724-9961 or Mindy Uhle at 515-242-6131.