



shampoo; and a history of eczema and psoriasis, Greene says.

The best ways to prevent it? Tilt and tug, says Greene. Put another way: "dry ears thoroughly by tilting your head to the side and tugging the ear lobe to let the water out after swimming," he explains.

Crissy Perham, a three-time Olympic medalist in swimming and now a high school coach, adds that "drying your ears out, getting ear plugs, or wearing swim caps pulled over your ears helps prevent swimmer's ear."

As a coach, "not a week goes by that I don't have one to two kids who are out of the water due to swimmer's ear, and sometimes we don't have a full squad at a meet," she says.

Showering before and after taking a dip in lakes, ponds, and oceans can help with prevention of skin rashes.

If Prevention Isn't Enough

If you have diarrhoea one to two weeks after swimming, drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration.

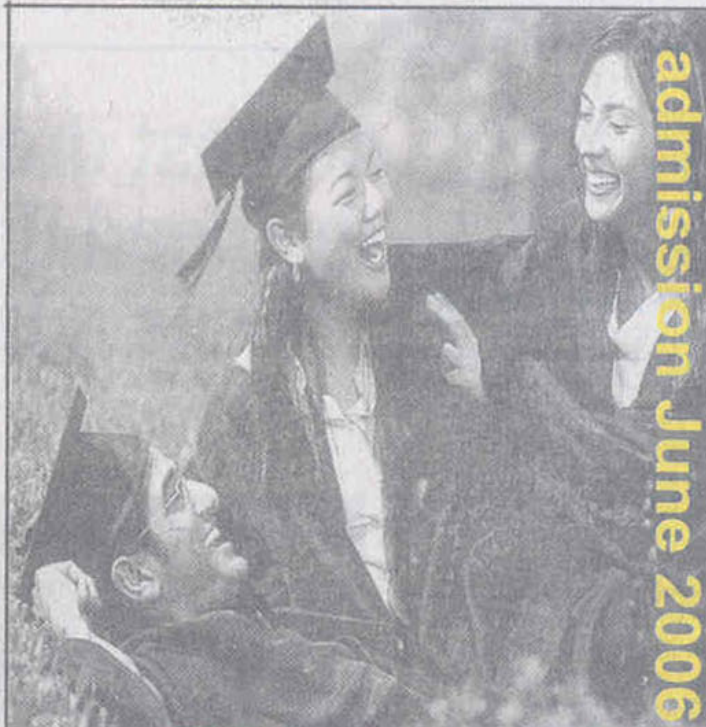
As for swimmer's ear, new treatment guidelines published in April 2006 suggest that antibiotic ear drops are the treatment of choice for swimmer's ear, yet up to 40% of kids with swimmer's ear get oral antibiotics instead.

But, Greene says, "they don't work, and when you give them, you give 100 to 1,000 times higher a dose than you do with the drops, and [oral antibiotics] get everywhere in the body, so you get side effects and increased bacterial resistance. There is absolutely no reason for a healthy, normal child to get oral antibiotics as first-line therapy for swimmer's ear."

Some eardrops are now available in once-a-day formulations, he says. For pain, oral medication can be given immediately.

Most cases of swimmer's itch do not require medical attention, but not scratching and using anti-itch cream can help. Hot tub rashes usually clear up in a few days without medical treatment.

Source: webmd.com



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