

# AMOEBA

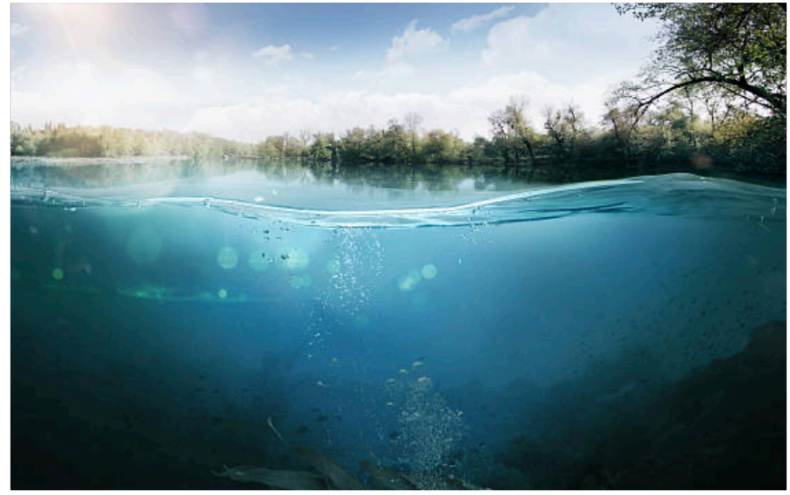
*Amebic encephalitis "brain-eating amoeba"*

## Amoeba - Basics

- Free-living amoebae are found during spring and summer in warm freshwater lakes, ponds, rivers, hot springs, and warm coastal waters
- Infection can occur after swimming, diving, bathing in warm, stagnant water, or via contaminated contact lens cleaning solution.
- Infection may also occur from poorly chlorinated swimming pool water. One cannot get infected via swallowing contaminated water.
- Amoebae migrate to the brain through the nose and cause inflammation and death of brain cells.

## Symptoms

- Severe frontal headache, high fever, altered smell or taste, nausea, vomiting
- Sensitivity to light, stiff neck, behavioral changes, drowsiness, hallucinations, seizures, coma



## Symptoms and Prevention Strategies

- Avoid diving and jumping into warm, stagnant freshwaters.
  - Verify adequate chlorination of swimming pools.
  - Limit the amount of water going up the nose, use nose plugs for unavoidable exposures.
  - Remove contact lenses before activity involving contact with water, replace contacts as prescribed, and clean contact lenses as instructed by manufacturer.
  - Early diagnosis and treatment is crucial as it may increase chances for survival! Infection is almost always fatal due to delayed diagnosis and poor response to therapy.
- Delayed treatment leads to seizures, coma, permanent brain damage, and death.