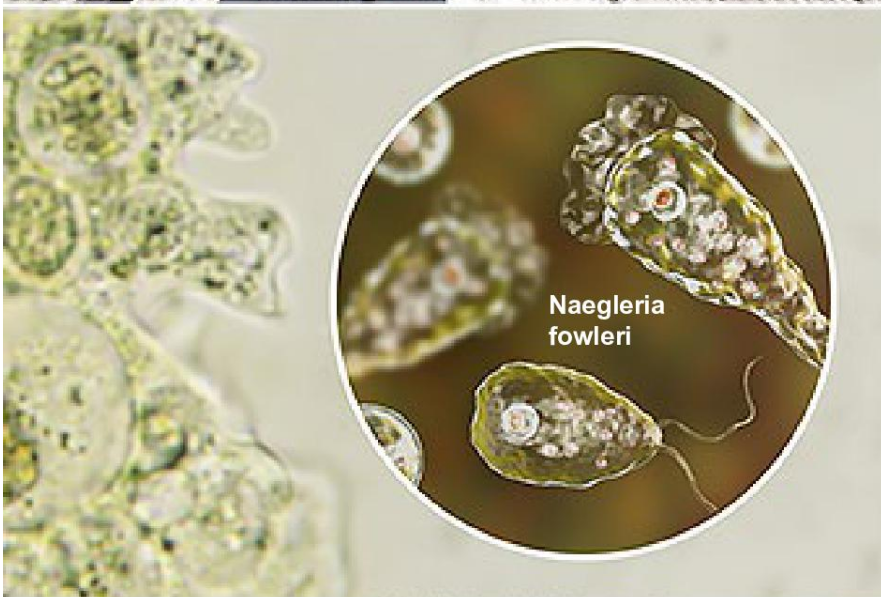




Naegleria Infection



Overview

This rare brain infection is caused by an amoeba. We call it *Naegleria fowleri*. It lives in sources of warm fresh water, like lakes and rivers. It can also live in the soil.

Causes

How do people get infected by *Naegleria*? Most often, people are exposed when they swim in or play in water that contains the amoeba. An infection happens when this water goes up the nose. The amoeba travels up the nasal passages and into the brain. It can also get into your brain if you breathe dust that contains the amoeba. You can't get a *Naegleria* infection from drinking contaminated water. And, it doesn't spread from person to person.

Symptoms

Symptoms usually begin within a couple of days or weeks of exposure. The person's sense of smell and taste may change. They may be sensitive to light. They may have a sudden, severe headache and a stiff neck. They may have fever, nausea and vomiting. An infection can cause sleepiness. It can cause loss of balance. It can cause confusion, hallucinations and seizures. These symptoms get worse very quickly. In most cases, they lead to death within a week.

Reduce your risk

To reduce your risk for infection, don't jump into or swim in warm freshwater lakes and rivers. If you do, use nose clips, or pinch your nose. And, avoid stirring up sediment when you swim. Talk to your doctor for more information.