

Look for "may cause cancer" -17/09/2011

Forty minutes swimming in a swimming pool that is disinfected with chlorine is sufficient for DNA damage. That can even lead to cancer, claims a Spanish research. "In particular, children face an increased risk," says Professor Alfred Bernard of Louvain-la-Neuve. Toxicologist Bernard is the pioneer for the past ten years of research into possible harmful side effects of chlorine in swimming pools. Especially his research showed that in young children asthma and other lung ailments can develop substantially by swimming in water disinfected with chlorine. He also found strong evidence that the bathing water in the swimming pool increases the risk of cancer.

New research led by Don Chisciotte, Iammari from Barcelona Kogevinas confirms this position. The researchers showed that 49 mature, healthy non-smokers swam lengths in a pool disinfected with chlorine. The combination of chlorine with organic waste, the sweat, dander and urine from the bathers led to about a hundred organic by-products from which a number of 1 or 2 carcinogen evidenced itself, due to absorption of chlorine through the skin.

In steel urine, blood and breath the Spanish researchers found a number of DNA marks that are absolute in indicating increased risk of Cancer Causing DNA marks. After 40 minutes they found by swimming in chlorinated water even seven times higher concentrations.

"But we do not know actually still what the long term effects are," says Professor Bernard. Should Olympic medal winner Fred Deburghgraeve, which spends half his life in the pool, be concerned of developing cancer? Bernard: 'there is as yet no such study that shows its long term effect. But this study shows at any rate, once again, that we have to deal with chlorine more cautious. ...and be aware that chlorine could be deadly.

We should not think that we can swim freely and without regard to our health, he says. We found even after 20 minutes some DNA damage. Swimming is and will continue to be a healthy way of exercising- The problem is the chlorine in combination with all the byproducts- in our swimming pools. There are good alternatives to chlorine and it is time to try this in our swimming pools.

(FDS)