



Welcome to the Bay of Plenty and Lakes region!

We hope you enjoy your holiday in our beautiful part of New Zealand.

Here are some helpful tips and local knowledge to keep you healthy and safe during your stay.....

Be Sun Smart!

To protect yourself from the sun, remember to Slip, Slop, Slap and Wrap!

Slip into a shirt and clothing that has good protection from the sun.

Slop on sunscreen before going outdoors.

Slap on a hat with a brim or with flaps.

Wrap on a pair of sunglasses.



Food & Drinking Water

We have some of the best, fresh food in the whole world! During your stay, we hope that you get to sample many of the fine foods that the Bay of Plenty and Lakes region has to offer. If you have any issues during your stay, we may be able to help you. Read on to find out when and how we can assist.....

Drinking water

In cities and towns, most people get their drinking water from the council supply. The quality of this water is monitored by the local authority and is safe to drink. Where there is no council water supply, buildings may have a private water supply and the safety is the responsibility of the owner. If you are not sure whether the water is safe for drinking, we recommend that you boil the water for one minute to remove any germs.

Food safety

Safe food requires correct handling, storage and cooking. New Zealand has very good systems in place to help ensure food that is bought in restaurants and shops is safe. Our Food Act Officers are responsible for the monitoring and compliance of food sold in New Zealand. This includes investigating food complaints, suspected food poisoning and monitoring imported food to ensure required standards are met.

When preparing food yourself it's easy to reduce the risk of food-related illness by following the four C's — Clean, Cook, Cover and Chill. Good and proper cleaning, cooking, covering and chilling of food can help reduce the risk of getting a food-related illness.

If you have a drinking water or food complaint or query, contact us on 0800 221 555 and ask to speak with a Health Protection Officer. For more information about food-related illnesses and safe food preparation, visit our website at www.toiteorapublichealth.govt.nz.



Pools and Hot Springs

Geothermal water is warm water that comes from the earth and is one of the unique attractions in the Bay of Plenty and Lakes region, and especially in geothermal areas of Taupo and Rotorua. Warm geothermal water may be found in natural outdoor pools, commercial and public swimming pools, and spas in hotels, motels, health centres and gyms. Amoebic meningitis is a very rare disease that can be caused by amoebae which can live in geothermal water. Some geothermal pools and spas are chemically treated but if unsure, and especially in a natural geothermal pool, we recommend that you keep your head above water at all times as this will keep you safe from this illness.

Contact us on 0800 221 555 if you have a complaint or enquiry regarding the hygiene of a local swimming area, or if you suspect you obtained an illness from using a pool.



Marine and Fresh Water

We have some of the most beautiful beaches, lakes and rivers in New Zealand. During your stay, if you decide to go for a swim or do watersports, there are a few things to be aware of...

After heavy rainfall

As a precaution, it is recommended that you avoid swimming in rivers, streams and harbours for 48 hours after heavy rainfall.

Algal blooms

Algal blooms caused by blue-green algae can be harmful to people and animals and can sometimes be found in our lakes and rivers, especially in the summer months. We advise you to look before you leap—if the water looks discoloured or murky, smells unusual, there is visibly dense algal growth, or if there is scum on the surface, go somewhere else to swim or to do watersports.

Gathering and eating wild shellfish

Shellfish can be affected by naturally occurring toxins, viruses and bacteria. To monitor these, regular testing is done on shellfish found in coastal waters and estuaries of our region. We recommend that you do not eat wild shellfish collected from near urban or built up areas. Health warnings are also issued if wild shellfish are affected by toxins or are otherwise not safe to eat.

To find out if there are current health warnings advising people not to collect or eat wild shellfish or swim in particular areas, visit our website or call 0800 221 555 and press 1 for the Bay of Plenty or press 2 for the Lakes region.

Preventing illness

The best prevention from illnesses is good hand washing.

Remember the 20 + 20 rule and help keep diseases away—wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and water then dry your hands for 20 seconds with a clean, dry towel or paper towel.

Sunbeds

There is no law which applies to the safe operation of sunbeds. There is a voluntary standard for sunbed operators which provides guidance on reducing risks from sunbeds. Sunbed operators are encouraged to comply with the voluntary standard.

We recommend that you ask if the business operates to this standard.