

Marylanders' Guide to Skin Wounds and Water Contact

Vibrio are bacteria that naturally occur in brackish water like the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, and in salt water, especially during warm weather months.

Vibrio infections are rare. However, when *Vibrio* comes into contact with an open wound, it can cause serious infections characterized by unusual redness, swelling and drainage.

This can be particularly dangerous for people with weakened immune systems.



PROTECT YOURSELF AGAINST *VIBRIO*

- Avoid water contact if you have any skin wounds.
- If water contact cannot be avoided, cover wounds with water-proof bandages.
- Clean wounds immediately with soap and clean water after contact. If soap and clean water are not available, clean the wound with hand sanitizer then wash as soon as possible.
- Wear water shoes to avoid cuts and scrapes.
- Wear gloves and use extra care when handling crab pots or other equipment.
- Always shower after swimming in natural waters and wash hands before handling food or eating.

**If you develop a wound with unusual redness, swelling or drainage,
SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION IMMEDIATELY and let your healthcare provider know
if you came in contact with brackish or salt water.**

For more information, check out

Maryland Healthy Beaches: Facts about Vibrio Bacteria at
mde.maryland.gov/programs/water/MHB/Pages/Vibrio.aspx

