

Subject: water swimmability

Recipient: watercomments@submissions.mfe.govt.nz

Sender: [REDACTED]

Date: 27/04/2017 11:12 PM

Dear MFE,

I am a pathologist with a qualification in microbiology.

Sure, let's keep our waters clear of human faecal contamination.

But let's also not get too strident and self-righteous - and unscientific - about nitrogen and coliform counts.

Most e coli are non-pathogenic (don't cause illness) and come from animals and birds, not humans.

Obviously drinking water from taps should have no coliforms.

But mildly elevated coliform counts in water where we swim rarely cause illness.

If we really want to improve our national health we need to look at smoking, road deaths, poor nutrition causing obesity, alcohol abuse, and violence and sexual abuse in families.

Dr Michael Gill, FRACP