



HIV Cannot Spread in Pools

Online comments in Texas shared misinformation.

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Some Texans recently took to Facebook to amplify rumors about AIDS spreading in a community swimming pool. To be clear, no cases of HIV transmission via swimming pools have ever been recorded, according to the University of Rochester Medical Center.

The Facebook post read: “HOA [homeowners association] Pool Infected with AIDS. 4th person positive. 4th person tested positive this week. Make sure everyone that visited this pool gets checked. The pool wasn’t cared for and chemicals were not used.”

While the exact location was not disclosed, the area circled on a map is in Arlington, Texas.

The Texas Department of State Health Services received a complaint on April 29 about an HOA pool’s alleged link to positive HIV results, according to Reuters, which fact-checked the allegation. An inspection found no unsanitary conditions in the pool water or on the pool deck.

Misinformation surrounding HIV transmission has circulated since the epidemic emerged in the early 1980s. In the United States, HIV is most commonly passed from person to person via sexual contact involving the exchange of certain body fluids. Untreated HIV can progress to AIDS.

Not only is HIV not transmitted via swimming pools, but the chemicals added to the water help protect against the spread of other pathogens.

“Chlorine kills germs found in blood (such as hepatitis B and HIV),” says the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on its website. “CDC is not aware of any instances in which a person has become infected with blood-borne germs after being exposed to a blood spill in a pool.”

HIV can neither survive for very long nor reproduce outside the body.

