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 marylandhealthybeaches.com/vibrio.html