

Research note

# Coliphage and bacteriophage as indicators of recreational water quality

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## Abstract

Five popular beaches in Southwestern Ontario, Canada, were investigated for the presence of coliphage, bacteriophage and the standard bacterial indicators of fecal waste. Using current phage enumeration techniques, both coliphage and bacteriophage were recovered at all five beaches on each of ten sampling trips. Coliphage and bacteriophage results were available in 6 and 18 h, respectively. Based on recent reports on the association of coliphage and bacteriophage with enteroviruses in surface waters, and the consistent occurrence of both coliphage and bacteriophage at the five beaches investigated, future studies, on the determination of health risks related to bathers, should involve virological analyses including the enumeration of coliphage and bacteriophage.

**Keywords:** coliphage; F<sup>+</sup> RNA bacteriophage; indicators; enteroviruses; recreational water

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