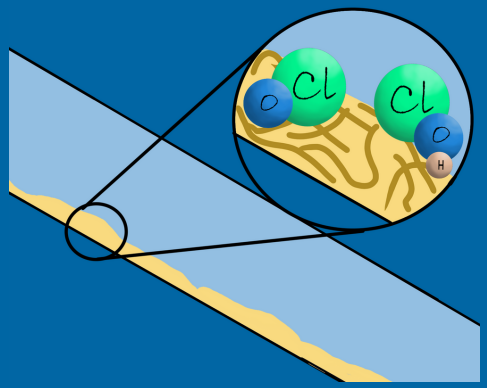
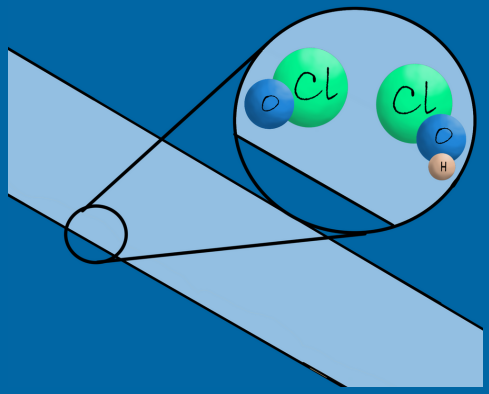
If the system hasn't had chlorine before, organic matter may have built up in pipes and can react with the chlorine to make chloramines.



But after water has had chlorine for awhile, the organic matter will be gone and won't grow back.



Over time the smell and taste should fade - because there is less matter to create chloramines and the smell.

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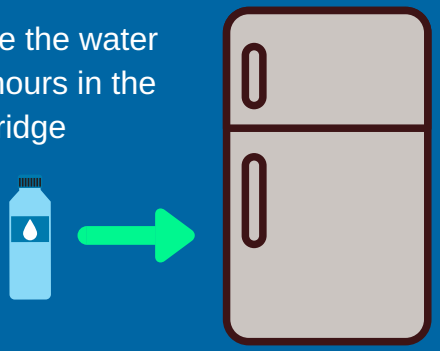
In the meantime, there are ways to get rid of the smell and taste.

Under-sink filters remove most chloramines

Or leave the water for 24 hours in the fridge



THE QUESTIONING ENGINEER

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Why is chlorine important in drinking water?

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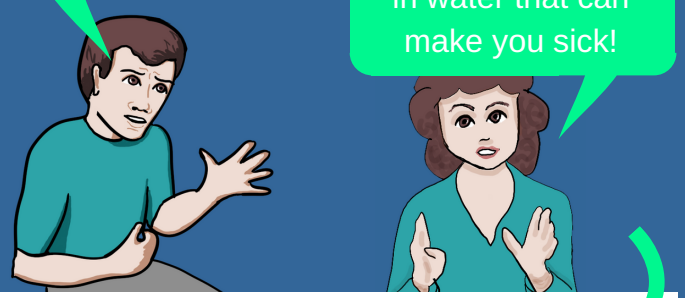
Why do we have to put chlorine in the water?

Chlorine is excellent at killing most of the micro-organisms in water that can make you sick!



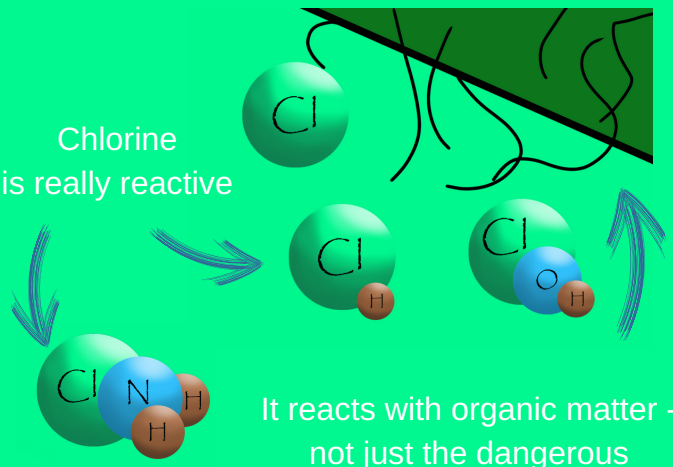
And chlorine keeps killing bugs after it leaves the treatment plant - all the way to your house. That is why it is called a **residual disinfectant**.

No other treatment safeguards water from recontamination like chlorine does.

But why does it have to taste and smell different? I like the old taste better.

It won't always - let's look at what chlorine does in water

Chlorine is really reactive



It reacts with organic matter - not just the dangerous pathogens.

The more organic material in the water the more chlorine is needed to be sure to kill the pathogens.

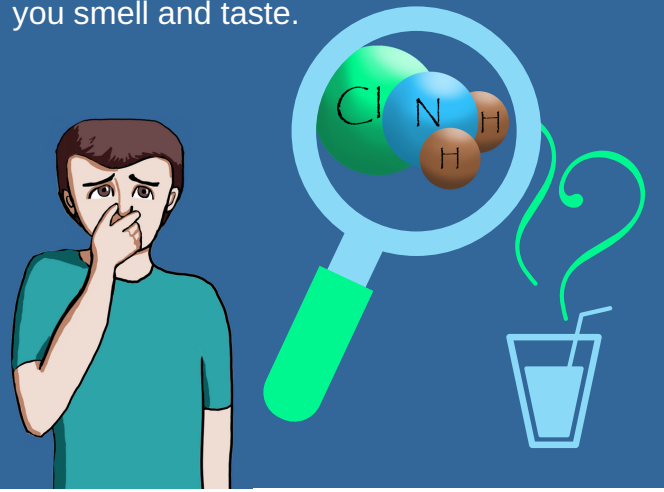
So water suppliers make sure the water has enough chlorine left to safeguard the water downstream.

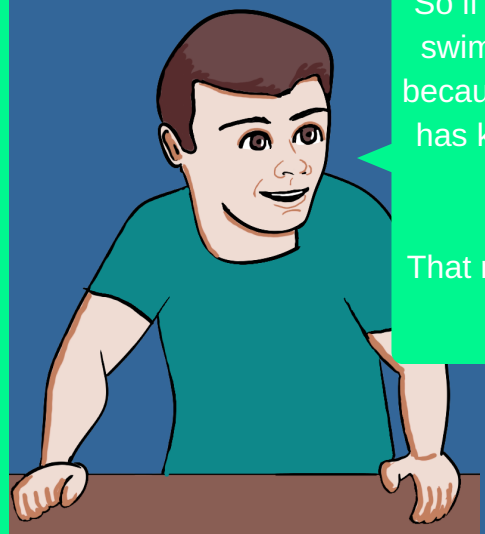
It's called freely available chlorine (FAC)

When chlorine reacts with the organic matter the resulting compounds are called "**chloramines**".

But it's not the freely available chlorine that you can smell and taste.

It's the chloramines you smell and taste.





So if it smells like a swimming pool it's because the chlorine has killed the living bugs?

That means it did its job!