

Be Water-Wise: Tips for Staying Safe Around Water

With summer right around the corner, knowing how to stay safe while cooling down in the pool or the lake is essential. Drowning can be easily prevented and it is important to have all the safety tips for staying safe while you swim!

Precautions to Take Before Swimming

- Assess your limitations & fitness level, as well as medical conditions that may inhibit you in the water.
- **Never** swim alone. Either swim with others present or watching, or swim in an area with a lifeguard present.
- Wear a life jacket appropriate for your weight and size, and always wear a life jacket while boating, regardless of swimming ability.
- If you are of legal age and make the decision to consume alcohol, make sure to not swim after consumption.
- Understand the dangers of hyperventilation.
- Know how to call for help.
- Understand and adjust to the risks present in your water environment such as river currents, rip currents, water temperature, shallow or unclear water, and underwater hazards such as vegetation or animals.

DID YOU KNOW?

Drowning is the fourth leading cause of death for children aged 1-4 and the third leading cause of death for children aged 5-14 (World Health Organization)

Swimming Skills to Stay Safe

Knowing the basic swimming skills listed below may seem silly at the time but they can create all the difference if a scary situation happens. Make sure that you know how to do these skills as well as remain calm when doing them in a hazardous situation.

- Enter water that is over your head, then return to the surface.
- Float or tread water for at least 1 minute.
- Turn over and turn around in the water.
- Swim at least 25 yards.
- Exit the water.



Know How to Help Others

- Pay close attention to small children or weak swimmers you may be supervising near the water
- Know the signs that someone is drowning
- Knowing ways to safely assist a drowning person
- Know CPR and First Aid

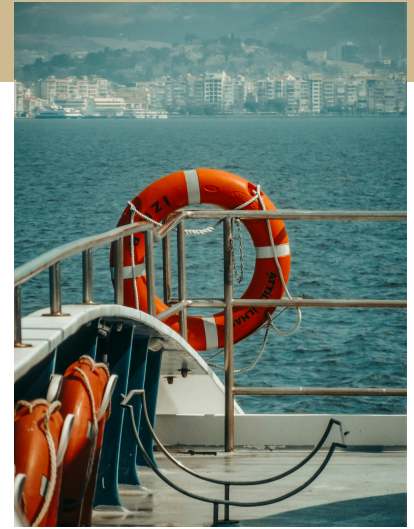


Source: The American Red Cross and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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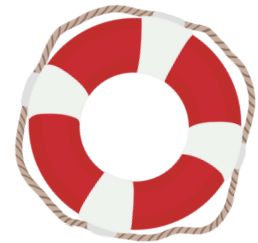
Know What To Do In An Emergency

- If a child is missing, check the water first! Every second counts!
- Alert the lifeguard if one is present.
- Recognize the signs of someone in trouble and shout for help. A swimmer needs immediate help if they:
 - Are not making forward progress in the water.
 - Are vertical in the water but unable to move or tread water.
 - Are motionless and facedown in the water.
- Rescue and remove the person from the water (without putting yourself in danger).
- Ask someone to call the emergency medical services, if you are alone, give the person two minutes of care and then call EMS.
- Begin rescue breathing and CPR
- Use an AED if available and transfer care to advanced life support.



How to Make Water Safety a Priority

- Use layers of protection in and around water.
- Even when lifeguards are present, stay vigilant and keep an eye on your children, or have another adult that you trust watch them.
- Watch the water and avoid distractions such as cell phone use.
- Teach children to always ask for permission to go near water
- Children, inexperienced swimmers, and boaters should use a Coast Guard approved life jacket.
- Take specific precautions for your water environment such as
 - Proper fencing around pools.
 - When at the beach, swim in an area with a lifeguard present.



Drowning is fast and silent—but preventable. Enroll children in age-appropriate swimming lessons to build skills and confidence. Always supervise kids closely, even if they can swim. Use U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets near lakes, rivers, and on boats—every time. Set a good example by wearing one yourself. Learn CPR so you're prepared to act in an emergency—your quick response could save a life.

Water safety starts with you. Stay alert, stay close, and make water fun and safe for your family.



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