

Swim safely this summer



Whether at a poolside barbecue, a rope swing at the lake or splashing around in the ocean, one of the best ways to beat the heat in the summer is going for a nice swim with friends or family. However, exercise caution, as this fun activity can turn into an emergency in a split second. Here are some tips to help you swim safely this summer.

Know how to swim! Knowing how to swim will naturally make you feel more comfortable and confident in the water. Swimming lessons can be equally beneficial for both children and adults. Having advanced swimming skills can help save your life, or the life of someone who may not know how to swim.

Know what to do in a water emergency — including how to help someone in trouble in the water safely, who to call for emergency help and CPR.

Inexperienced swimmers and children should wear U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets around water, but do not rely on life jackets alone.

Always swim with a buddy; do not allow anyone to swim alone, especially children. Never leave a young child unattended near water and do not trust a child's life to another child; teach children to always ask permission to go near water.

Heed safety signs and flags. If there is a sign, flag, notice of cut-off time or other warning for swimming—listen! There are warnings for a reason and can help you avoid accidents, injuries or worse.

Keep aware of your surroundings while in the water.

Be aware of other things like weather, currents, water levels, as well as other people who may be doing other activities close by like boating, fishing or jet skiing. Remember, always get out of the water and seek shelter if there is thunder or lightning. Watch for animals who call the water their home.

Avoid drinking alcohol before or while swimming, diving or supervising swimmers. It can slow your reaction time or hinder your ability to respond to a situation.

Don't forget the sunscreen! Nothing puts a damper on summer fun quicker than a sunburn. Use sunscreen with an SPF of 30+ that blocks both UVA and UVB rays, wear sunglasses with UV protection, and wear a wide-brimmed hat. Try to stay in the shade from 10 AM to 2 PM, when the burning UV rays are most intense.

Be sure to heed these swimming safety tips before jumping into the pool, lake or ocean –it could save the life of you or someone you love.

Source: American Red Cross: Water Safety.

<https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/water-safety.html>



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