

- › **Avoid swimming in risky places.**
 - › Risky places include fast-moving water, such as streams, rivers and drain sewers, as well as other settings where water gathers but is not intended for swimming, such as abandoned surface mines and quarries.
- › **Keep safety equipment available for emergencies.**
 - › A first aid kit and a life ring with rope, a long, sturdy pole or shepherd's hook should be kept poolside and go with you when you're near water in natural settings.
- › **Read and obey posted warnings.**
 - › Signage that indicates an unsupervised area, swimming danger, rip currents, thin ice or other potential hazards are posted to save lives. Obey them.
- › **Know how to loosen the grip of a struggling swimmer.**
 - › A struggling swimmer can quickly overwhelm the person they grab onto for help. A safe method to break away is to take a deep breath, go under water and twist free of their grip. Then yell for help immediately so a stronger swimmer can go to their rescue or someone can supply a life ring or long stick to drag them to safety.
- › **Take breaks – together.**
 - › Swimmers and supervisors need a break to remain fresh, get a snack or visit a bathroom. Never leave children unattended. Everyone takes a break together.

For more information visit American Academy of Pediatrics Water Safety page.

www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-play/Pages/Water-Safety-And-Young-Children.aspx



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Water Safety

Be smart. Do your part.
Water safety depends on you.



Water is essential for life, but it can also be dangerous. A young child can drown in as little as 20 seconds, and an infant only needs to go face down in water for a second to die from drowning. Even experienced swimmers can suffer a medical emergency and drown.

Practicing simple water safety tips can prevent tragedy.

General Water Safety Tips

NEVER leave an infant or child alone in or near water, including the bathtub.

Learn CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) contact the American Red Cross at www.redcross.org to sign up.

Learn to swim and teach able children to swim.

Avoid alcohol or any mind-altering substances when swimming, boating or supervising children around water.

Home and Yard

Falling face-first into an inch or more of water, or any liquid, can be deadly for an infant, toddler or young child. It's important to eliminate that possibility. Some tips:

- › **Always** empty liquids from containers such as buckets, bathtubs, sinks, wash basins, water toys, kiddie pools and coolers **before** walking away from them. They can be refilled later if needed. Use lids to secure garbage cans and rain barrels.
- › Close and childproof doors to rooms or areas that have sources of water such as laundry rooms, pool decks and bathrooms. Lower and childproof toilet lids.

- › Make sure large fish tanks are not accessible from furniture and keep them securely covered.
- › Keep electrical appliances such as fans, hair dryers, radios and power tools away from water.

Pools and Spas

Swimming pools, hot tubs and jacuzzies are particularly dangerous for exploring, curious children. Reduce the attraction and create barriers to keep them safe. Some tips:

- › Remove toys from pools and spas.
- › Surround pool and spa areas on four sides with an unclimbable fence that is at least four feet high, with a gate whose self-locking latch is at least 54 inches off the ground, and slats less than four inches apart.
- › Install an alarm on the door that leads to the pool or spa area. Floating alarms or below-water alarms in the pool or spa are also good to supplement, not replace, personal supervision.
- › Remove and lock away ladders to pools when the area is not supervised.
- › Warn children about getting close to pool or spa drains. The strong suction can entrap hair or clothing.

Cover hot tubs and jacuzzies with a lockable lid after each use.

Swimming

Swimming is great exercise and a great way to cool off. A few simple rules can also keep it safe.

- › **No one should swim alone.**
 - › One-to-one, constant supervision is a must for children who cannot swim.

Non-swimmers should be no more than one arm's length from the person directly supervising them. Take responsibility for your own child. If you leave, they leave.

- › Designate a team of trustworthy strong swimmers as "water watchers" for children who can swim. Water watchers must be able to rescue a child from deeper water. It's a good idea to set a series of a one-minute reminders to avoid distraction and to limit shifts to 15 minutes if possible. Make sure the next watcher knows their shift has started.
- › Even strong swimmers should have an attentive swim companion. Lifeguards are only backups to personal swim companions.
- › **Wear a certified life jacket.**
 - › Swimmers and non-swimmers should wear personal flotation devices when boating or fishing, or swimming in natural settings.
 - › PA state law requires all children under 12 years of age to wear a certified life jacket when boating. Life jackets are also recommended for young swimmers in every setting. Foam noodles, inflatable rafts and arm bands are not replacements for certified life jackets.
- › **Never dive head-first into unfamiliar water.**
 - › Determine the depth and temperature of unfamiliar water then enter feet first. Check for submerged hazards before diving.