

Sun, Swimming and Pool Safety



The sun's out, temperatures are rising, and most of us are looking forward to spending some time outdoors and in a pool. It's important that we all take steps to protect ourselves and others while spending time in the sun and the pool.

First, choose a sunscreen that is appropriate for your skin. Ensure that your sunscreen is broad-spectrum or multi-spectrum (protects against UVA and UVB rays), an SPF of 15 or greater, and water/sweat resistant. Also: 1) apply sunscreen 15 to 30 minutes before going out into the sun, 2) re-apply every 40 minutes for continued protection, 3) don't forget areas such as your ears and feet, 4) apply UV protective lip balm to your lips—your lips can burn too, 5) pay attention to the expiration dates on sunscreen (they can lose effectiveness over time), 6) apply sunscreen anytime you will be outside (even on gray overcast days as 80% of harmful UV rays make it through the clouds).



Safe swimming tips include:

- **Swimming and pool safety starts with checking the pool.** Check the pool's recent inspection or maintenance report. Make sure the drain at the bottom of the deep end is visible and ensure the drain covers at the bottom appear to be secure and in good repair. Use pool test strips to make sure the water's pH and free chlorine or bromine concentration are correct (pH 7.2—7.8, free chlorine concentration at least 1 ppm, and free bromine at least 3 ppm), and verify there are no open chemicals.
- **Supervision in and around water.** Designate a responsible person to supervise children in and around pools. Supervision of pre-school children should be "touch supervision", close enough to reach the child at all times. Adults should not be engaged in other distracting activities, even if a lifeguard is present.
- **Use a buddy system.** Always swim with a buddy and choose pools that have a lifeguard.
- **Seizure disorder safety.** If you or a family member has a seizure disorder, always provide one-on-one supervision around water.
- **Learn to swim.** Providing formal swim lessons can protect young children from drowning, but supervision is still needed when young children are around water.
- **Learn CPR.** It can take several minutes for paramedics to arrive, learning CPR can save lives.



- **Water toys.** It's important to keep in mind that air-filled and foam water toys (i.e. water wings, pool noodles, inner tubes) are **NOT** safety devices. Additionally, clear the pool and deck areas of water toys to prevent children from attempting to go back into the pool unsupervised.
- **Avoid alcohol.** Avoid alcohol when participating in water recreation activities such as swimming, boating, or water skiing. The CDC (Center for Disease Control) reports that 70% of water recreation deaths were related to alcohol use amongst adolescents and adults.
- **Avoid holding your breath for long periods of time.** Teach kids to avoid holding their breath for long periods of time while swimming. Holding your breath for long periods of time can cause you to experience hypoxic blackout or shallow water blackout (pass out) which can result in drowning.
- **Teach children about swimming pool drains.** It is important to teach kids the dangers of drain entanglement/entrapment and to never play or swim near drains or suction outlets.
- **Beware of all bodies of water.** Because children can drown in all types of bodies of water, it is important to also be aware of:
 - Buckets and pails with water. Empty buckets and pails when not being used and store them upside down.
 - Ice chests with melted ice. Place heavy weighted objects on ice chests to prevent children from opening.
 - Fish tanks. Place fish tanks in areas that children cannot access.
 - Fish ponds, landscape ponds, and fountains. Place safety or grille coverings over ponds and fountains that are able to support the weight of a child to prevent accidental drowning.
 - Bathtubs and toilets. Empty bathtubs *immediately* after use and place latches on toilet seats to keep toilet seats shut.



<https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/swimmers/inflatable-plastic-pools.html>

<https://www.webmd.com/beauty/features/whats-best-sunscreen#1>

<https://joshtheotter.org/resources/drowning-prevention-tips-layers-of-protection/>

<https://images.search.yahoo.com/search/images>

