PARENT
HEALTH BULLETIN

JUNE 2019

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC:
WATER SAFETY

Swimming is a great activity and can be a lot of fun. However, swimming can also come with risks. Nearly 1,000 kids die each year by drowning. The majority of these drownings occur at a home swimming pool. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, drowning is the second leading cause of accidental death for those between the ages of 5 and 14 in the United States. Therefore, it is important to know how to help you and your kids be safe while in the water — including pools, hot tubs, or open water.

Before you head out to the beach or a pool, make sure you are aware of some swimming safety tips.

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Disabilities accommodated with prior notification.

Kids should only swim in the ocean when there is a lifeguard on duty.

Home pools

• Never leave a child unattended near water, and maintain constant supervision.

• Teach children always to ask for permission to go near water and to never go in water without an adult present.

• Make sure backyard pools have four-sided fencing that is at least 4 feet high and a self-closing, self-latching gate to prevent a child from wandering into the pool area unsupervised.

Beaches

• Kids should only swim in the ocean when there is a lifeguard on duty.

• Kids can be caught in a rip current or undertow easily. Inform children that they should swim parallel to the shore, or they should tread water and call for a lifeguard's help if they are caught in a current.

Lakes and ponds

• Children should wear life jackets at all times when on boats, docks, or near bodies of water. Adults should wear life jackets both for their own protection and to set a good example.

• Children who are swimming should always have adult supervision.

• Make sure kids wear foot protection; even in the water. They should wear aqua socks or water shoes because they could get hurt from jagged rocks, broken glass, or trash that is in the water.

• Make sure your child knows never to dive into water except when allowed by an adult who knows the depth of the water and who has checked for underwater objects.

Teach children always to ask for permission to go near water and to never go in water without an adult present.

• A majority of boating accidents involve alcohol. When you and your family are out boating, be sure to assign a designated driver who will not drink. Be sure your kids know about the dangers of alcohol, on and off the water.

Overall water safety

It is important to teach your child how to swim so that they feel comfortable in the water. Check with your local American Red Cross or community center for information on water safety courses or swim lessons. Remember to stop swimming or boating as soon as you see or hear a storm. Always put on sunscreen, a hat, and sunglasses before you go outside.

SOURCES:

• https://www.safekids.org/tip/swimming-safety-tips
• https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/water-safety/swim-safety.html
• https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/news-features-and-safety-tips/Pages/Swim-Safety-Tips.aspx
• https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/water-safety.html