

Water Safety for Everyone

Swimming is a fun activity and a great way to keep cool during the hot summer months, but it's important to know how to stay safe in and around water.

Drowning is swift and silent—there may be little splashing or cries for help. It can take as few as 20 seconds to sink below the water and only minutes to drown, but you can stay safe by following these tips—whether around a pond, lake, river, ocean, or pool.

- Make sure you know how to swim. If you can't swim, keep to shallow areas or use a U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket. For a list of places offering swim lessons, go to www.mass.gov/dph/swimsafety.
- Swim with a buddy, never alone, even if you are a very good swimmer.
- Swim in designated areas, with a lifeguard present
- Swim sober: avoid drugs and alcohol to stay alert in the water
- Do not dive or jump into water that is not at least 12 feet deep. Enter the water feet-first, never dive head-first into a river, lake or pond. You could severely injure your head and neck, and drown.
- Do not swim during a storm or when there is lightning.
- Don't swim in an area with strong moving currents in the water. Depth, currents, underwater debris and water temperature change constantly in rivers, lakes and ponds. Yesterday's safe swimming spot might have hidden dangers today.
- Keep a cell-phone handy and know where you are in case you need to call for help
- When in a boat, wear a US Coast Guard approved life jacket.



Learn CPR!

Find a class near you:

The Red Cross offers a wide selection of trainings on CPR/AED, first aid, lifeguarding, swimming and water safety, caregiving, disaster response and emergency preparedness. For information on classes, visit redcross.org/ux/take-a-class.



The Massachusetts Injury Prevention & Control Program
Visit our website www.mass.gov/dph/swimsafety for more information, or call us at 617-624-6060.