

Water Safety

Think!!!

Are you and your family planning to spend some of this summer by the sea, by the pool, or perhaps even a river or lake?

Then ask yourself: Would you be able to spot someone in trouble in the water, in time to save their life: **do you really know what drowning looks like?**

(<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/196538.php>)

DROWNING

The process of experiencing respiratory impairment from submersion / immersion in liquid.



“Drowning Doesn't Look Like Drowning”

- We have all been coached by TV dramas like Baywatch and/or cartoon films
- When asked to describe a drowning we would probably say:
 - thrashing their arms wildly above their heads
 - making loud cries of help

Signs of Instinctive Drowning Response

(a term coined by Dr Francesco A. Pia, a water safety expert)

What people do to avoid suffocating in water:

- they don't splash much
- they don't wave
- they don't yell or call out

Quite different to what many of us might expect!!

Reality: a person who is drowning is more likely:

- to remain quiet
- to be unnoticeable
- to sink silently



Look out for:

Signs that can help us notice when people might be drowning:

- eyes are either closed or appear glassy and unfocused
- their head is tilted back with mouth open or it is low in the water with the mouth at water level
- their hair covers their forehead and eyes
- they are hyperventilating or gasping
- they are trying to swim in one direction but getting nowhere
- they try to roll on their back or their body is vertical and they are not using their legs

Signs of spinal injury ☹️

- Signs of a spinal injury can include things other than paralysis, but require immediate attention. They include:
 - Bruises, scrapes or cuts to the head or face
 - Pain or tenderness in the neck or back
 - Partial or complete paralysis, difficulty breathing
 - Weakness in the arms and/or legs
 - Numbness and tingling in the arms and legs



Children

According to the CDC

- Most drowning of very young children occur in residential swimming pools - major factor is lack of barriers and supervision
- Most young children last seen indoors, out sight for less that 5 minutes, and were under supervision of one or both parents
 - Pool barriers like fencing can help stop children getting into pool area, or at least delay the time it takes before an adult notices they are gone
- The percentage of American children that drown in natural water settings such as lakes, rivers and the sea goes up with age. Among those that died in boating, 9 out of 10 were not wearing a life jacket

Adults



- If swimming or boating in natural water, be aware of local weather conditions, and how to interpret colored flags on the beach
- Beware dangerous waves and rip currents. If caught in rip current swim parallel to shoreline and don't swim toward shore until free of the current
- If boating, ensure everyone, no matter how good a swimmer or how far they are travelling, or how big the boat, wear an approved life jacket
- Alcohol is a problem: half of adult and adolescent deaths that occur in and around water and about 1 in 5 American deaths linked to boating are a result of alcohol. Alcohol affects judgment, balance and coordination, and being in the heat and sun increases the effects



Boating

Whatever happens, don't assume if one of your crew falls overboard that they are OK.

→ Remember: drowning does not always look like drowning!

The person may look like they are casually treading water and looking up at you and there is nothing to worry about. But how do you know?

Ask them, "Are you OK?" And if they say "yeah, I'm fine", then they probably are. But if they continue to stare blankly, you may only have seconds to reach them.



Also remember

Possibility of heart attack/stroke:

- When hot and jumping into cold water
- When swimming in warm water with cold currents
- When swimming just after eating full meal

Or drowning due to:

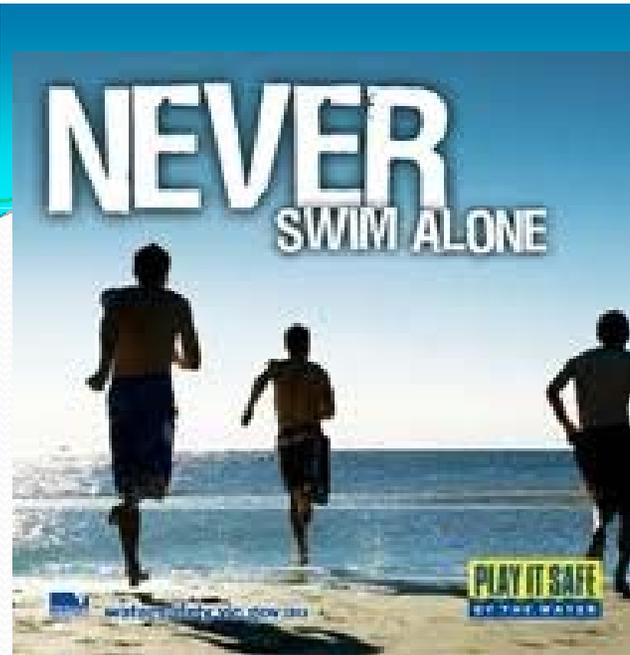
- Being “overrun” by waves
- Having cramps in leg(s) or arm(s)
- Being exhausted

Accidents (in Germany)

- 327 people in 5 years ended up in wheelchair
Average age 16-25 years
40% intoxicated
- 363 drownings after diving into water - 80% could have been prevented by not jumping in headfirst
- **40% of people cannot swim 20 feet and drown trying to get to safety**
- **410 people drowned in 2011**



KEY FACTORS:



Age

- ◆ 30% of deaths for children ages 1-4 have been because of drowning
- ◆ 5,000 children ages 14 and under are hospitalized due to near-drownings each year in US
- ◆ 20% suffer severe, permanent neurological disability

Gender

Men are more likely to die from drowning incidents than females.

- ◆ **Men are more likely to participate in water sports**
- ◆ **Men are more often near water for work or recreation**
- ◆ **Men also take more and greater risks, or tend more often to overrate their swimming abilities**

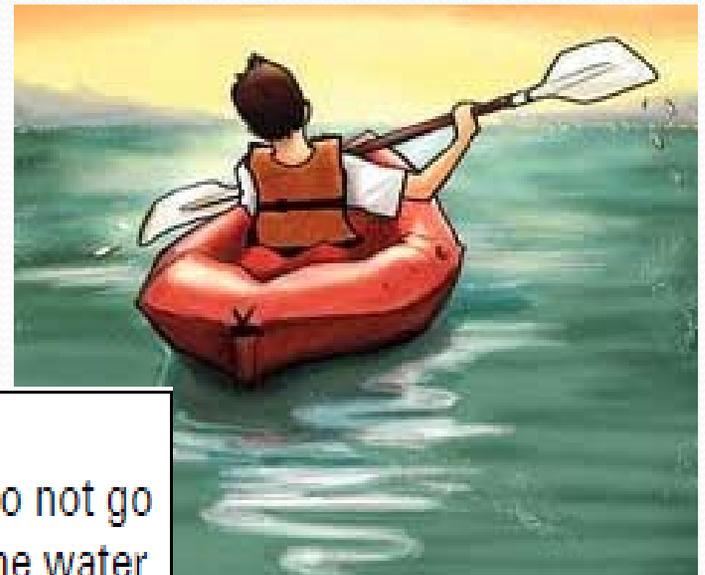


Place of Occurrence

- ◆ The vast majority of drownings occur in open water– the sea, lakes, ponds, rivers
- ◆ Drownings can still occur in bathtubs, swimming pools, and ditches



Also in Winter!!



If you cannot swim then do not go beyond the level, where the water gets deeper than your chest!

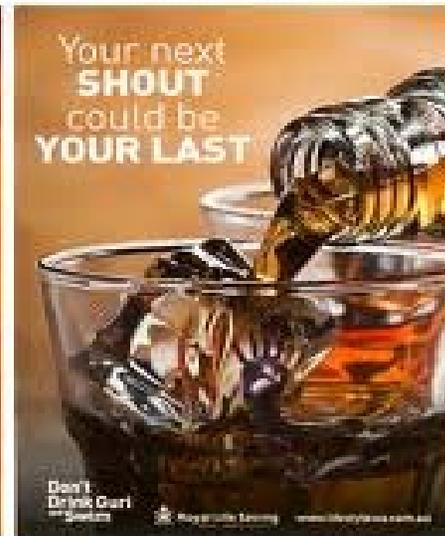
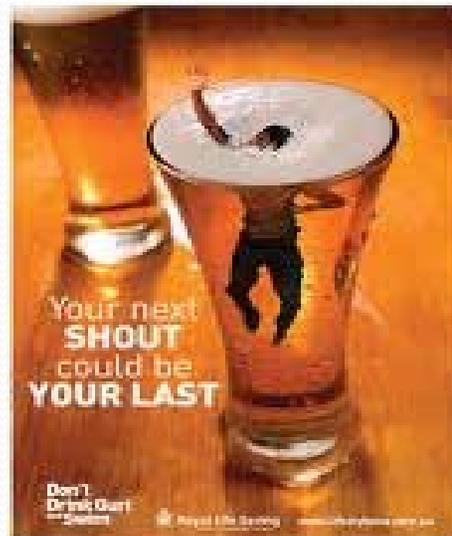


Climate Conditions

- ◆ **Low Water Temperature**
- ◆ **Wind**
- ◆ **Air Temperature**
- ◆ **Length of Exposure**
- ◆ **Time of Day**
- ◆ **Visibility**

Use of Alcohol

- ◆ When boating and swimming alcohol is involved in 1/3 of all drowning incidents
- ◆ Alcohol influences balance, coordination, and judgment, and its effects are heightened by sun exposure and heat



Supervision

- ◆ Lack of proper supervision for young children
- ◆ Small children have been known to drown in just a few inches of water
- ◆ Children can drown in a bucket of water
- ◆ Not knowing what they are doing



**2 min not supervised
can make the difference
between life and death**





How to Minimize Accidents

- ◆ **Be safe around water:**
 - ◆ Learn to swim and know “your” limits
 - ◆ Swim only in authorized areas
 - ◆ Explore water feet first
 - ◆ Don’t swim alone
 - ◆ When boating, use flotation devices
 - ◆ Watch children closely
 - ◆ Don’t mix swimming with alcohol
- ◆ **Swim ONLY in designated areas:**
 - ◆ Open water should be considered off limits unless specially posted for swimming

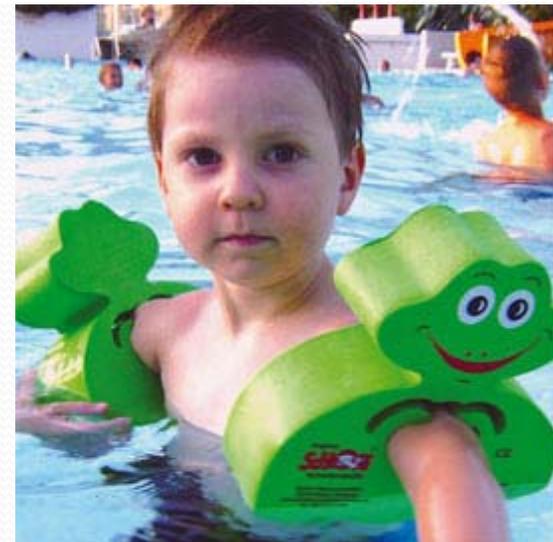
Safety Equipment

In a Boat

- ◆ Lifejacket
- ◆ Correct Size



At a Pool





Indoor Pools

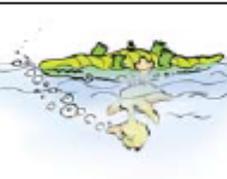
- **No glass bottles**
- **No swimshirts, the water is heated up. Leave the water when cold and take a shower before returning to water**
- **Always watch your children closely**
- **Lifeguards do not watch your children or possessions**
- **Don't run, surface is wet and slippery. Wear flip-flops when walking**



Lakes and Rivers

- **Make yourself familiar with depth, current, etc..**
- **Don't drink and swim**
- **Always watch your children**
- **Swim only when a lifeguard is on duty**
- **Swim in marked zones only**

Stay Safe Rules

	<p>Take a cold shower before entering the water! Leave the swimming pool immediately, if you are feeling cold in there!</p>		<p>Shipways, docks, harbors, bridge piers, bulwarks and dams should not be used for swimming and bathing!</p>
	<p>Do not jump in the water, unless it is deep enough and is free of other swimmers!</p>		<p>Don't overestimate and exceed your abilities and strength in deep waters!</p>
	<p>Unknown waters may harbor danger!</p>		<p>Never enter the water with either a full or a completely empty stomach!</p>
	<p>Avoid swimming in water that is marshy or swampy and is cover with vegetation (which might entangle the swimmer)!</p>		<p>Avoid intensive sunbathing!</p>
	<p>After swimming, immediately dry yourself well and change into dry clothes!</p>		<p>Show consideration for other swimmers especially children!</p>
	<p>Air mattresses, rubber hoses, tire-tubes and inflatable rubber toys are dangerous toys, when swimming!</p>		<p>It is life threatening to swim during a thunderstorm!</p>



REFERENCES

<http://www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationalSafety/Water-Safety/waterinjuries-factsheet.html>

<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/196538.php>

<http://www.ilsf.org/index.php?q=en/drowning/facts>

<http://www.dlrg.de/rund-um-die-sicherheit.html>