



Swimming Season: Pool Safety



As we head into the summer months and warm weather takes over, the pool is bound to be a popular destination. Swimming is a great way to get in exercise and have fun in the sun, but pools can be dangerous, especially for little ones, if safety is not kept top of mind. According to the National Safety Council, in 2016 “more than 3,700 people drowned... in the United States” and drowning “was the leading cause of preventable death for 1 to 4 years old.” Following some basic safety guidelines and understanding the risks associated with pools can help to keep everyone, especially children, safe this summer.

Staying Safe at the Pool

One of the first components of pool safety is swimming skill level. Swimming skills vary widely and many people either do not know how to swim or need improvement. If you have not yet learned to swim whether as a child or as an adult, you still can. Check out your local recreation center or community pool. You may be pleasantly surprised at all the different swim classes they offer, ranging from infant to adult.

Enrolling young children in swim lessons and familiarizing them with water, in addition to educating them about potential dangers, can be lifesaving. And being able to swim as an adult makes it much easier for you to assist your child in the pool and enjoy some fun with them.

Even if you know how to swim well, there is still a chance that you could drown. The National Safety Council (NSC) suggests that nobody should swim alone and, when possible, you should swim where lifeguards are present. NSC also points out that even where lifeguards are present, parents should always be actively watching their children; with young children, always keep them within arm’s length.

To stay ahead of potential accidents at the pool, especially when you visit a pool with smaller children, make sure that safety rules have been discussed and, most importantly, be sure to enforce those rules. Encouraging safe behaviors around pools can help to build safe habits.

Another essential component of pool safety is having the proper equipment nearby and knowing what to do if a pool-related injury or accident does happen. You should always keep a first aid kit nearby even if that means carrying one with you in your beach bag. [CPR training](#) is also a crucial component of pool safety. Knowing how to perform CPR, on both adults and infants, so that you can assist in the event of an emergency could be the difference that saves someone's life.

If a child does go missing near water, the American Red Cross says to always check the water first. Seconds can matter when drowning is involved and getting them out as quickly as possible is crucial to reviving them and preventing injury or death.

Home Pool Safety

If you have a pool at your home, it is imperative that you take proper measures to make the pool and the area surrounding the pool safe, especially if you have small children in your house. According to the American Red Cross, pools should be enclosed by "completely surround[ing] your pool with a 4-foot high fence or barrier with a self-closing, self-latching gate."

In addition to the proper perimeter being set up, ensuring that pool drains are properly covered and there is no damage to the existing pool drains should be a top priority. If not properly protected, drains can have high-powered suction and could cause injury or death.

One Final Tip...

Last, but not least, be sure to stay hydrated, use sunscreen, and have fun.

Sources:

National Safety Council, "[Splashing Into Summer; Pool Safety Tips](#)"

American Red Cross, "[Home Pool Safety](#)"

American Red Cross, "[Swimming Safety Tips](#)"