

# 10 RULES FOR SAFE WATER FUN

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## NEWS YOU CAN USE

### Do Not Forget These Other Great Resources:

Healthwise® Handbook, the 24-Hour Nurse Line, Nurse Online Chat, Audio Health Information Library® and you can go online to [www.express-health.com](http://www.express-health.com) for links to reliable health information.

### Challenge:

Establish and reinforce rules and safe behavior for you family when playing by water.

### Sources:

<http://www.prevention.com/health/healthy-living/home-swimming-pool-safety?page=2>

<http://www.livestrong.com/article/125350-swimming-water-safety/>

<http://news.health.com/2011/07/02/make-water-safety-a-priority-for-your-kids/>

[http://www.sparkpeople.com/blog/blog.asp?post=water\\_safety\\_tips\\_for\\_an\\_active\\_and\\_safe\\_summer](http://www.sparkpeople.com/blog/blog.asp?post=water_safety_tips_for_an_active_and_safe_summer)

<http://www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/water-safety/home-pool-safety>

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Water safety can be taken for granted when families and friends are having fun in the sun and enjoying the water and good company. However, dangerous accidents can happen easily, so it is important to be cautious. The Centers for Disease Control reports that every day, about 10 people die from unintentional drowning. Hopefully you already practice water safety without thinking much about it, but take a minute to review safe water practices and consider what areas you can improve. Keep in mind that these rules apply not only to pools and swimming but any body of water and any activity in or around water.

- 1. Sign kids up for swim class.** The American Red Cross recommends beginning swimming lessons for children by age 4 or 5. Remember that this does not guarantee their safety and children still need monitoring especially if under the age of 14.
- 2. Learn CPR and how to use an AED.** This skill could save a life during a water accident. Performing CPR while waiting for the paramedics to arrive can save a life.
- 3. Have a designated “water watcher” to actively supervise swimmers.** This person should be a strong, confident swimmer whose only job is to remain close to the water. This person needs to keep an eye on every swimmer, intervene when there is rough, unsafe play, and jump in when a swimmer is struggling to stay afloat.
- 4. Keep pool water clean and clear.** Maintain proper chemical levels, circulation and filtration. Regularly test and adjust chemical levels to minimize adverse reactions.
- 5. Use proper flotation devices.** Non-swimmers and beginners should use a personal flotation device, such as a life jacket, that is approved by the US Coast Guard. These devices should have a snug fit based on weight and size of the person. Air-filled water-wings, inner-tubes and rafts are meant for play, but they are not for rescue.
- 6. Use a buddy system.** Swimming alone is risky for anyone. Always swim with a buddy nearby if you get in trouble.
- 7. Do not dive, run, or push.** It is important to enter any body of water carefully, especially with lakes or rivers where it can be difficult to gauge the depth and what is below the surface of the water. Running and pushing increases risk of slipping, falling and causing severe injury.
- 8. Keep rescue equipment by the pool.** This includes a life preserver, a shepherd's hook, first aid kit and a phone.
- 9. Fence in pools.** For best safety, pools should have a 4-foot or higher enclosed fence. Pool gates should self-close and self-latch above a young child's reach.
- 10. Teach children to not play near pool drains, skimmers, pipes and pool equipment.** Long hair and jewelry dangling can get caught and be dangerous. Drains can cause entrapment.