
Summer Safety Tips

Swimming

Never swim alone!

Swimming alone is dangerous. Always swim at beaches with lifeguards.

Talk with the lifeguard before entering the ocean. The lifeguard is familiar with the beach and can tell you where the safest places are to swim.

Know how to swim!

Swimming in a pool is not the same as swimming at a beach with crashing waves, winds and currents that can change suddenly.

Swimming in currents and waves is much more difficult than swimming in a pool. The conditions of the currents and waves can change quickly, unlike in a pool where there is consistency. Swimming in currents and waves will also cause fatigue more quickly than swimming in a pool. Smooth water located between breaking waves could signal the presence of a rip current. Ask the lifeguard about the use of a United States Coast Guard-approved flotation device. Further, your body will cool quickly while in the water. Limit your time in the water and get out if you start to feel cold.

Know the meaning of, and obey warnings represented by, colored beach flags. Different beaches may use different colors, but a commonly used series include:

- Double Red: beach is closed to the public
- Single Red: high hazard (e.g., strong surf or currents)
- Yellow: medium hazard
- Green: calm conditions, although caution is still necessary
- Purple: flown with either red or yellow: Dangerous marine life, but not sharks.

Take your cell phone to the beach. In case of an emergency where the lifeguard is not present, call 911.

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