

TEST YOUR SAFETY I.Q.

Q How much water can you drown in?

A One inch of water can cause a child to drown. This means everything from the toilet or bathtub to a pond or pool can be a risk to a child.¹

Q Where do most childhood drownings take place?

A Over 50% of drownings occur in a child's own pool,² and 1/3 take place at friends, neighbors or relative's pools.³

Think**First** about...

DEATH AND INJURY STATISTICS

- 5,000 children age 14 and under are hospitalized each year as a result of near drowning. 20% will endure severe and permanent disabilities,⁴ while 15% will die in the hospital.⁵
- Personal floatation devices would have prevented approximately 89% of boating-related drownings in the years 2001 and 2002.⁶
- 70% of preschoolers that drown are in the care of one or both parents at the time of the incident.⁷
- In the year 2001, alcohol was associated with 25-50% of adolescent and adult water recreation deaths, and was involved in as many as 50% of adolescent boy drownings.⁸
- Approximately 1,000 recreational diving injuries occur each year.⁹
- 90% of diving injuries result in quadriplegia.¹⁰

WHEN AND WHERE INJURIES ARE MOST LIKELY TO OCCUR

- Bathtub drownings account for half of all infant drownings.¹¹
- 90% of diving injuries take place in six feet of water or less.¹²
- Natural bodies of water are the site of 75% of diving incidents.¹³

WHO IS MOST LIKELY TO INCUR THIS TYPE OF INJURY?

- Over 80% of drowning victims are male.¹⁴
- For children under age 14, drowning represents the second leading cause of injury-related death.¹⁵

HEALTH COSTS

- Each year, pool drownings and near drownings of children 14 and under cost the United States \$6.2 billion.¹⁶
- A near drowning victim's medical expenses are around \$75,000 initially and \$180,000 yearly, while brain damage can cost up to \$4.5 million.¹⁷

PREVENTION TIPS

- Always swim with a buddy, and make sure children are always supervised by an adult.¹⁸
- Never drink alcohol when participating in water activities.
- Never dive in water less than 9 feet deep.¹⁹
- Always wear U.S. Coast Guard approved life jackets when boating.²⁰
- Enter water feet first the first time to test if an area is safe to dive.²¹
- Four-sided isolation fencing that is self-closing and self-latching, and gates that are at least five feet high should be installed around home swimming pools.²²
- Enroll children 4 years and older in swimming lessons.²³

ThinkFirst about...

- Immediately empty and store buckets and wading pools after each use.²⁴
- Watch for undercurrents, changing waves and undertows in a lake or ocean.²⁵
- Make sure drain covers are not cracked.²⁶
- Use safety covers that lock on spas and pools.²⁷
- Have a telephone by a home pool for emergencies.²⁸
- Learn CPR.²⁹
- Don't dive in above ground pools.³⁰
- Swim parallel to the shore if caught in a rip current. Once out, swim to the shore.³¹

STILL NOT CONVINCED?

In just 10 seconds, a child can become submerged, 2 minutes later lose consciousness and in 4-6 minutes sustain permanent brain damage. Drowning is a quick and silent killer. A child does not scream for help, and death can occur in minutes. The majority of children who drown are out of sight for less than five minutes.³²

Just as drowning can cause brain damage or death in minutes, diving can result in spinal cord injuries or death in seconds. Water can provide endless hours of fun and enjoyment for everyone, but in just seconds a day of fun can turn into tragedy. Follow these safety precautions and enjoy the water safely.

ThinkFirst

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