Did you know?

- Thousands of people drown in the United States each year.
- Most drownings happen when there is poor or no supervision.
- Immediate action and first aid can prevent death.
- If a person falls into cold water their body temperature drops very quickly and can cause hypothermia.
- Any source of water is a potential drowning hazard.

Who is at increased risk of drowning?

- Young children.
- Individuals who cannot swim.
- Individuals with mobility challenges.
- Individuals who are drawn to or fascinated with water and may not understand the dangers.

What are the signs someone needs help or is drowning?

- Someone is in the water fully clothed.
- Uneven swimming motions can be a sign the swimmer is getting tired.
- The person is sinking and only their head is above water.

Sources and Resources


**Water Safety USA**, [https://www.watersafetyusa.org/](https://www.watersafetyusa.org/)


**MedlinePlus**, Near Drowning, [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000046.htm](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000046.htm)

Be wise and supervise, it could save a life!
How should I respond to a water emergency?

• If someone is missing, check the water first.
• Call 911.
• Call out for help.
• Only enter the water if you have strong swimming skills and it is safe to do so. Use a rope or other object to pull a person to shore.
• Help the person to remain calm.
• If the person has stopped breathing, start rescue breaths, which you may need to start in the water. Start CPR once they are safely to shore.
• Be careful when handling the person in case they have an injury.
• Provide first aid for any injuries.
• Remove wet clothing and cover the person in blankets or warm clothing.
• Encourage the person to seek medical attention even if they seem okay. There could be complications that are not visible right away.

Prevention

• Never swim alone.
• Swimming lessons can be lifesaving.
• Only swim in areas monitored by lifeguards.
• Have someone supervise individuals swimming in the water, even if a lifeguard is on duty.
• Know where the closest lifeguard or other help is.
• Don’t mix alcohol and water activities.
• Never leave someone with mobility challenges alone near water. Provide constant supervision and stay within arm’s reach.
• Provide one-on-one supervision for individuals with a seizure disorder when near water.
• Young children or others who cannot swim should wear a Coast Guard approved life jacket.
• Do not use water toys such as noodles or water wings in place of life jackets.
• Take classes on water safety, first aid and CPR. Red Cross can be one resource for these trainings.
• Have a cell phone within reach in case of an emergency.
• Have items close by that could be thrown to someone having trouble in the water such as ropes with buoys, long branches, etc.
• Know the signs of hypothermia – drowsiness, weakness and loss of coordination, pale and cold skin, confusion, uncontrollable shivering, slowed breathing or heart rate.
• Watch for changes in water and weather conditions.
• Stay far back from the water’s edge to avoid accidentally falling in.
• Encourage the person to seek medical attention even if they seem okay. There could be complications that are not visible right away.