Drowning Prevention, CDC

TO HELP PREVENT WATER-RELATED INJURIES:

- Make sure an adult is constantly watching children swimming or playing in or around the water. Do not read, play cards, talk on the phone, mow the lawn, or engage in any other distracting activity while supervising children.
- Never swim alone or allow your children to swim alone in unsupervised places. Swim with a buddy. Select swimming sites that have lifeguards whenever possible.
- Avoid drinking alcohol before or during swimming, boating, or water skiing. Avoid drinking alcohol while supervising children around water.
- Learn to swim. Enroll yourself and your children in swimming classes. The American Academy of Pediatrics does not recommend swimming classes as a means of drowning prevention for children less than 4 years of age.
- Learn cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Because of the time it might take for paramedics to arrive, your CPR skills can make a difference in someone's life.
- Do not use air-filled or foam toys, such as “water wings,” “noodles,” or inner-tubes, in place of life jackets (personal flotation devices). These are toys and are not designed to keep swimmers safe.

IF YOU HAVE A SWIMMING POOL AT YOUR HOME:

- Install a four-sided, isolation pool-fence. The fence should be more than 4 feet high and should completely separate the pool from the house and play area of the yard. Check with your city ordinances as requirements for fence height and type vary by location.
- Use self-closing and self-latching gates in the fence with the latches out of children's reach. Consider additional barriers such as automatic door locks and door alarms to prevent access by small children to the yard or pool.
- Toys should be removed from the pool immediately after use. Floats, balls, and other toys might encourage children to enter the pool on their own or to lean over the pool and potentially fall in.
- Contact the insurance agent you have your homeowner's insurance through for any other special requirements or considerations.

TIPS FOR RECREATION IN OR AROUND NATURAL BODIES OF WATER:

- Know the local weather conditions and forecast before swimming or boating. Strong winds and thunderstorms with lightning strikes are dangerous to swimmers and boaters.
- Use U.S. Coast Guard - approved life jackets when boating, regardless of distance to be traveled, size of boat, or swimming ability of boaters.
- Heed colored beach warning flags.
- Watch for dangerous waves and signs of rip currents, (for example, water that is discolored and unusually choppy, foamy, or filled with debris). If you are caught in a rip current, swim parallel to the shore. Once out of the current, swim toward the shore.
- Follow any and all warning signs that are posted near bodies of water.

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