

Stay safe in the water this spring break

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(HealthDay)—For many Americans, spring break is a good time to head for a beach, lake or pool, which means it's also time to start thinking about water safety.

"Families seem to be spending time around water this time of year, so it is important to remind ourselves of the basics of [water safety](#)," Michelle Fanucchi, chair in the department of [environmental health sciences](#) at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, said in a university news release.

"It is easy to become complacent when it comes to water safety. Being aware of the dangers of water and reminding our children of basic guidelines may help prevent an accident from occurring," she said.

Drowning is the leading cause of injury-related death among American children aged 1 to 4, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

When at beaches, pools and lakes, adults should never let children out of their sight, safety experts say. There should be a designated parent or responsible adult acting as a lifeguard at all times.

"Most recreational swimming areas do not have a lifeguard on duty. It's easy to think that someone else is watching, so selecting an adult to be the designated lifeguard ensures the children are being watched at all times," Fanucchi said.

It's also important to teach children to swim, and for [children](#)—as well as everyone else—to wear a life jacket when on a boat.

When swimming in the ocean, people need to be mindful of riptides and know how to escape them. Don't try to swim against a rip current, Fanucchi said. Trying to do so will only tire you out. The United States Lifesaving Association recommends swimming parallel to the shore until you're out of the riptide, and then swim back to shore.

More information: The American Red Cross has more on [water](#)

[safety](#).

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