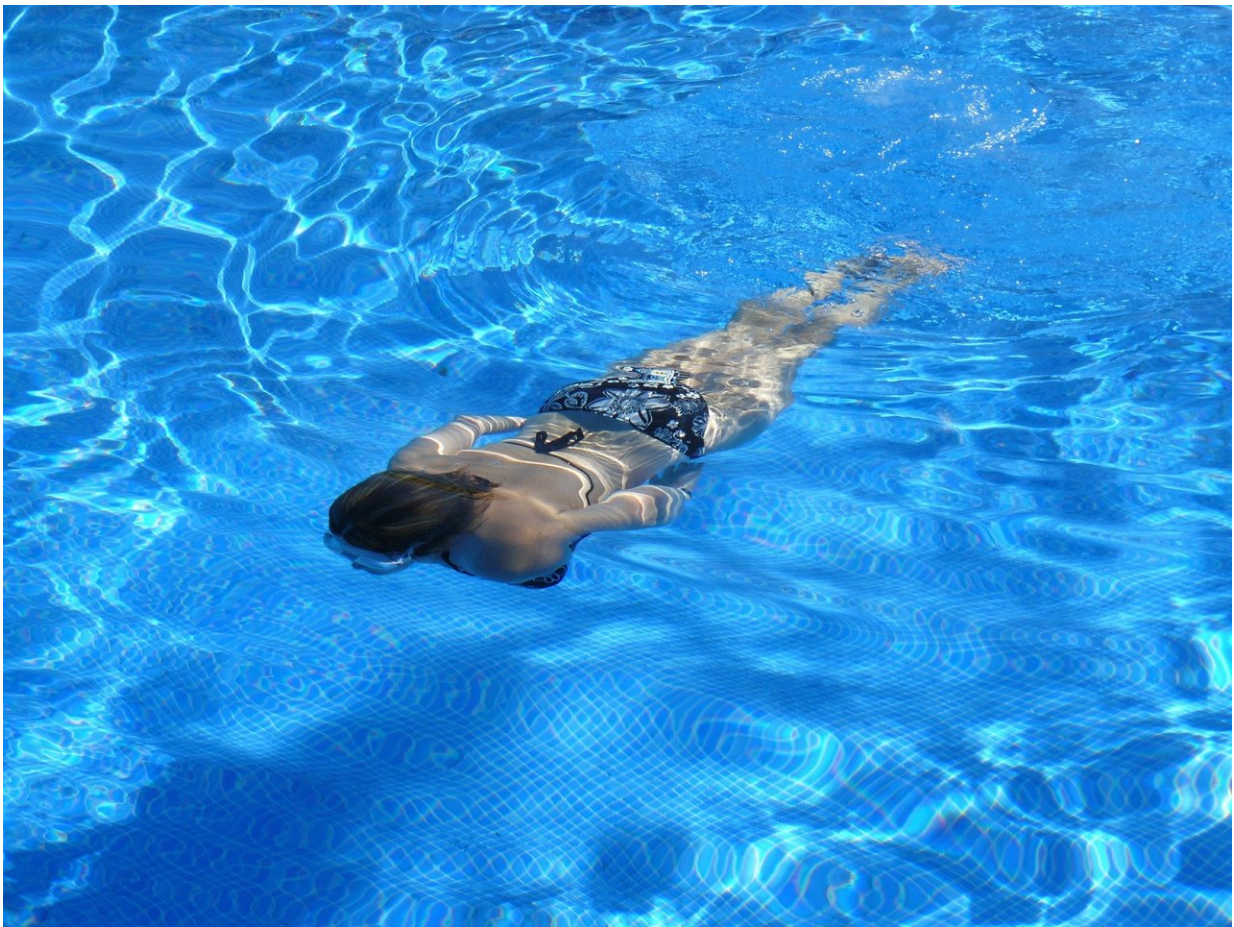


Should you wait 30 minutes to swim after eating?

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It's advice parents have been giving their children for generations.

"When I was growing up, I remember my mother telling me, you know, not to go in the pool until it was 30 to 60 minutes after I had my last meal," says Dr. Michael Boniface, a Mayo Clinic emergency medicine physician.

He says the motherly advice had serious origins but may not be as helpful as once thought.

Boniface says he remembers the anticipation all kids experience waiting for those 30 to 60 minutes to pass before he could jump back in the water.

"The old feeling was that, after you eat, some of the blood may be diverted to your gut so that you can digest, diverting the bloodstream away from your arms and legs," he says. "And you may get tired or fatigued, and be more likely to drown."

But is this recommendation to wait based on fact or fiction?

"We know now that really there is no scientific basis for that recommendation," Boniface says. "You may end up with some stomach cramping or a muscle cramp, but this is not a dangerous activity to routinely enjoy."

So, while it may not be the most comfortable thing to go for a swim with a full belly, the world won't end if you ignore your mom's [advice](#)—just this once—and don't wait 30 to 60 minutes after you eat to get back in the water.

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