

Summer water fun can bring drowning risks: How to stay safe

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As you seek to cool down in a pool or at the beach this summer, always

keep water safety for yourself and others in mind, an expert urges.

"With children, I always recommend starting swim lessons at an early age and having parents put on floaties or life vests on their children when near any [water](#). Parents should also never let their kids swim alone without supervision and ensure they're following [safety](#) measures just like they would in other situations," said Dr. Samuel Prater. He is medical director of emergency services at Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center.

"If you have a pool at home, or a boat, it's also extremely important that you're not only following state [water safety](#) regulations and guidelines, but also doing everything you can to prevent any avoidable injuries," Prater said in a health system news release.

Some suggestions:

- Never swim or operate a boat after drinking alcohol or using certain prescription medications.
- When operating a boat, always wear a life jacket, have a passenger serve as an additional lookout to spot any potential dangers in the water, and always move at a safe speed.
- Even if you consider yourself a strong swimmer, always swim with someone else nearby in case you run into trouble.
- Follow pool rules, such as not diving in [shallow water](#) or running on the pool deck.
- If you have a pool at home and small children, there should be fencing around the perimeter of the pool to prevent any accidental falls into the water.
- Check to find out if there are dangerous bacteria levels in lakes, ponds and rivers before going into those bodies of water.
- Watch out for glass and trash at the pool, beach or lake, to avoid

cuts and other injuries.

It's also important to know the signs of drowning and what to do when it happens, including CPR. The American Red Cross has several guidelines on what to do if someone is in trouble, Prater said.

More information

The American Red Cross has more on [water safety](#).

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