



Pool and Water Safety for Children

Pediatric Patient Education Handout

Tips to Keep Your Child Safe Around Water

Drowning is fast and silent and can happen in seconds. With close supervision and safety measures, most water injuries are preventable.

Active Supervision

- Always provide touch supervision for infants and toddlers (within arm's reach)
 - Stay focused — no phones, alcohol, or distractions
 - Designate a “Water Watcher” when kids are swimming
 - Never assume another adult is watching
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Swimming & Skill Safety

- Enroll children in age-appropriate swim lessons
 - Teach children to float on their back and reach the pool edge
 - Even strong swimmers still need supervision
 - Teens should never swim alone
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Pool Safety Rules

- Install a 4-sided fence at least 4 feet high with a self-closing, self-latching gate
 - Keep doors and gates locked
 - Remove toys from the pool area when not in use
 - Use approved life jackets (not floaties) near open water
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Infants & Toddlers

- Empty buckets, kiddie pools, and tubs immediately after use
 - Never leave a child alone in the bath — even for a moment
 - Toilet lids should be closed and secured if possible
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Lakes, Rivers, & Beaches

- Always wear life jackets
 - Watch for currents, waves, and changing conditions
 - Avoid swimming in fast-moving or murky water
 - Teach kids to enter feet first unless the area is clearly marked safe
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Pool Behavior Rules for Kids

- Walk, don't run
 - No diving in shallow water
 - No pushing or rough play
 - Ask permission before entering water
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Be Prepared

- Learn CPR for infants and children
 - Keep rescue equipment nearby
 - Call 911 immediately in any drowning or near-drowning situation
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Remember

- Drowning is often silent — no splashing or yelling
 - Most drownings happen during short lapses in supervision
 - Layers of protection save lives
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Bottom Line

Water activities can be fun and safe when adults stay alert, barriers are in place, and children learn water skills early.

If you have questions about swim readiness or safety, talk with your pediatric provider.