

THINKFIRST CANADA'S SWIMMING INJURY PREVENTION TIPS

Whether you're swimming at the beach or in the backyard, each swimming environment has a measure of risk that participants should be aware of to avoid sustaining a catastrophic injury. Here are ThinkFirst Canada's top tips for reducing your risk of sustaining a catastrophic injury while swimming. This information is taken from Chapter 13 "Swimming" in the ThinkFirst book entitled *Catastrophic Injuries in Sports and Recreation: Causes and Prevention – A Canadian Study* edited by Charles H. Tator and published by the University of Toronto Press in 2008.



TOP TIPS:

- Never leave children unsupervised near water.
- Learn to swim and tread water.
- Never swim alone. Every swimmer should be supervised, and this applies to pools, lakes, and rivers.
- Weak swimmers should wear a certified personal flotation device (PFD).
- Learn lifesaving skills (first aid and lifesaving courses).
- Put secure, four-sided fencing and barriers around residential swimming pools and open water.
- Avoid alcohol and drugs, even in small amounts, when swimming.
- Feet first, first time! Protect your neck and head – never dive into shallow or unknown water. Learn to do shallow dives. Twice your height is the safe depth of water for diving.
- Check the weather and water conditions, especially in rivers and lakes.
- Identify water-related hazards (such as docks, rocks, and logs) in your community so that other participants will be aware.

Remember: thinkfirst.ca before you play!