



WATER SAFETY ON HOLIDAY

KEEP YOUR KIDS SAFE



Holidays are a great time for children and their families. When going to new places it is important to remember that the new setting and environment may not be as child-friendly as it is at home.

Over the last six years:

- 30 children under 10 years old have drowned in holiday swimming pools abroad.
- More than 60 children die in the UK each year by drowning. These included accidents at the beach, coast and in the bath. Children can drown in less than 3cm of water.

Children who survive almost drowning can have long-term disability or serious health problems.

When you are booking your holiday, try to ensure that the swimming pool or water area where you plan to stay has a safety fence that acts to prevent children getting to the pool without adult help. Be aware that laws and safety regulations can be very different abroad even if the holiday is booked through a British company.



Most drowning is preventable. Here are some tips to help keep your child safe on holiday:

- Please appoint a responsible adult to watch your children **at all times** in or near water, even if the child can swim
- Never leave your child under the supervision of an older child
- When booking your holiday, or arriving at the destination check the safety arrangements of any water-based activities and if there is lifeguard cover at the pool or beach
- Swim with any children in your care – it's more fun and you can keep them close and safe
- Even good swimmers should never swim alone because if they do get into trouble there is no one to raise the alarm
- Check bathing sites for hazards, check the safest places to swim and always read the signs – find out what local warning signs and flags mean
- For younger children who cannot swim consider the use of personal protection equipment such as arm bands
- Follow the pool rules
- Take time to check the depth, water flow and layout of pools
- Parents and carers should never enter the water under the influence of alcohol or recreational drugs.
- On beaches, check when the tide will be high and low and make sure that you won't be cut off from the beach exit by the rising tide. Also be aware of dangerous rip-currents
- Inflatable dinghies or lilos are a well-known hazard – each year there are drownings when people on inflatables are blown out to sea. Do not use them in open water
- Do not swim near to or dive from rocks, piers, breakwater or coral
- Swim parallel to the beach and close to the shore
- Be familiar with Basic Life Support Guidelines for children

More resources

Royal Life Saving Society UK - rlss.org.uk

Drowning Prevention Foundation - drowningpreventionfoundation.com

National Water Safety Forum - nationalwatersafety.org.uk

World Health Organisation Factsheet on Drowning - www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs347/en/

Resuscitation Council - resus.org.uk

www.patient.info