

Water Safety

General

- Learn to swim – this is THE single most important thing you can do.
- Swim with buddies.
- Swim in a supervised area.
- Avoid murky water.
- Don't drink alcohol. This causes over-confidence and loss of balance (so you can't tell up from down).
- Avoid ditches – after heavy rain the can fill and flow fast with debris.
- Avoid piers, diving platforms when you're in the water
- Make sure water is deep enough before entering head first

Problems and dangers:

- Sea
 - Current – don't swim against it, swim across and out.
 - Rips – returning water causes very strong currents. Swim across and out.
 - Tide – watch out for being cut off by a rising tide.
 - 'Dangerous animals' – see below.
 - Cold.
 - Depth.
 - Surf – check the surf conditions before entering water.
- River
 - Current.
 - Snags (underwater trees, roots, etc).
 - Depth.
 - 'Dangerous animals'.
- Swimming pools
 - No running, pushing.
 - Ensure the pool is supervised.
 - Stranger danger.
- Dams
 - Outlet – high suction (like a plug hole).
 - Depth – they are designed to be deep.
- Lakes
 - Possible pollution.

Precautions and treatment

- Sunburn
 - Use sunscreen and wear a hat.
 - When skin feels warm and dry time to put on a shirt.
 - Severe sunburn see the doctor.
- Skin cancer.
- Cramp.
 - Tight muscles in legs, arms and stomach.
 - If swimming take a deep breath and float, grab cramped muscle tightly and massage. Get out of water as soon as possible. Attract attention.
- Exhaustion
 - Never get so tired that you can't swim back.
- Stone fish
 - In creeks and the sea.
 - Instant pain followed by swelling.
 - Wear shoes.
 - Treat with hot water (43C).
- Box jelly
 - DRABC.
 - Use vinegar to prevent stinging cells firing for at least 30sec.
 - Pick off remaining cells with tweezers.
 - Pressure bandage and splint – above stung area.
- Cone Shells
 - Pressure immobilisation.
 - Medical emergency – call 000.
 - No antidote.
- Leeches
 - If there are enough may cause loss of blood.
 - Brush of, if not firmly attached, or use heat or salt.

- Blue ringed octopus
 - Leave animal it alone – it only bites when picked up or trodden on.
 - Bites and injects neurotoxin – heart may stop but NOT dead. Use EAR.
 - Pressure immobilization.
 - Reassurance.
 - Medical emergency – call 000.



Box Jelly



Cone Shell



Blue Ringed Octopus



Leech



Stonefish