



The Wave

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Practice Water Safety this Winter

By Leslie Crawford

Practice water safety in the winter? Pools are closed, our children are bundled up. Why worry about water safety now with the warm weather so far away? Leslie Crawford shares real-life experience.

Mary fell in the pool - a true Thanksgiving Day story! Fortunately when all the guests arrived for our family gathering I asked my children what they would do if cousin Mary, who was 4 years old, fell in the pool. Both answered, "we'd jump in and get her". They were only 6 and 8 years old. There was potential to have 3 children at risk .

We immediately sat down and had a safety talk about what to do if Mary did fall in the pool. Our rules were:

1. Don't jump in
2. Yell for help while running to get an adult
3. Make sure an adult understands there is danger and acts *immediately*.

Soon after our conversation the children went out to play on the swing set. The adults were inside preparing our feast when my children came running in yelling, "Mary fell in the pool!" Mary's grandmother ran out the door, flew across the yard and jumped in the pool to save Mary.

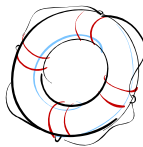
Another family member had to help both Mary and Grandma out of the pool. Other than having 2 very cold family members, all was well.

After our heightened emotions

calmed, there was time for reflection and discussion. Should Grandma have jumped in the pool?

No! Mary was right at the edge of the pool. All Grandma needed to do was lay down on the deck, extend her hand to Mary, grab Mary and pull her to safety. Basic life saving, teaches the best way to assist someone is:

1. Lie down and reach out to the victim. If the person is too far away,
2. Find something to extend to the victim i.e. a shepherd's crook, a life ring, a noodle, the handle side of a rake, a rolled up towel, or anything else that could be extended far enough for the victim to grab hold of.
3. Jumping in should be the last resort but most importantly by a physically able adult, NOT a young child.



We had a huge wake up call that Thanksgiving. When you are visiting someone's home with a pool this holiday season, you need to take the following into consideration for your child's safety.

1. If the children are playing outside, make sure they know to get help, not jump in the pool, if someone

falls in.

2. Has the pool been maintained? A green pool full of debris obstructs seeing the bottom of the pool. This could hamper a rescue effort if a child is missing .
3. Toys floating in the pool are a temptation. Ask for them to be removed.
4. Heavier clothing absorbs water making it more difficult for a child to stay afloat, even if they have been trained to roll over on their back and float.
5. Falling into cold water can take your breath away, making it more difficult to breathe and react calmly.

At SwimJim we are always concerned with safety. Our class levels are based on how proficient a swimmer is floating on their back and navigating the water. We strive to have every swimmer learn the habit of rolling onto their back after entering the water and staying on their back until they get to safety.

However, even the most skilled back floater can panic in an emergency situation. As parent's we can't let our guard down regardless of the season. Water accidents can happen 365 days per year. Make water safety part of your holiday season through continual water safety education and swimming lessons.



Special Winter Health and Safety Newsletter

Special points of interest:

- Pool accidents happen 365 days per year
- Prepare for water emergencies
- Weather conditions do not cause illness
- Wet hair does not cause illness
- Swimming and other physical exercise boosts children's immune systems
- Year round swimming helps children gain skills that last a lifetime
- 2009 Registration has begun





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Registration for 2009

We know everyone's thoughts are preoccupied with the holiday hustle and bustle. To get prime time slots for swim class next year, we wanted to remind you registration for 2009 has begun.

The 2009 Registration Documents are at www.swimjimtexas.com. You may fax the completed documents to 713.490.0521 or email them to infotx@swimjim.com. Upon receipt we'll call you to schedule class times.

Our tuition structure has changed for 2009. To take advantage of Early Bird pricing (current prices) January's tuition must be paid by Dec. 7, 2008. Value pricing will be in effect Dec. 8–14. Base tuition will be in effect Dec. 15 onward. The last day to purchase the Spring Semester Package is December 21, 2008.



Myths of Winter Swimming



As cooler weather approaches, many parents face a dilemma, "to swim or not to swim," during the winter months.

Many old wives tales abound concerning children's health and the winter. Often parents

don't understand the difference between health basics and popular mythology. Dr. Norris Payne of Payne Pediatrics offers some facts to dispel these myths.

- MYTH: Swimming, cold and wind may cause ear infections.
- FACT: Middle ear infections (*otitis media*), common in small children, are caused by viruses and infectious colds. Typically, fluid from the Eustachian tubes in the ear drain through the nose and throat. During illness, passages constrict and the fluid builds up and may become infected. Swimmer's ear (*otitis externa*) is an infection of the ear canal. The actual cause of swimmer's ear seems to be a combination of factors. Warm humid air, warm water, length of time exposed to water, the natural enzymatic activity in the ear canal and the presence of bacteria are factors that predispose the ear to swimmer's

ear.

- MYTH: Parents think a clear, runny nose is not contagious.
- FACT: A clear runny nose does not necessarily indicate a lack of infection. On the other hand, a colored discharge does not necessarily mean infection. Other symptoms should be considered as well as the length of time the symptoms have been present.
- MYTH: Sudden changes in temperature or getting caught in the rain will cause colds.



the weather just a coincidence. Viruses cause colds, not the weather. However, Dr. Payne does agree changes in weather conditions may cause allergies to flare up. Sneezing and runny noses lasting a few days are indications of an allergic reaction; colds last about 10 days.

Having addressed these rumors, we would like to offer some advantages to winter swimming.

- **CONTINUITY:** Without a doubt, chil-

dren who swim through the winter months have a better chance of reaching and maintaining their swimming goals. Each age has its "ripeness" for achieving new water skills. If a child acquired a skill to the point of it being an automatic reaction, then he/she is more inclined to retain the skill. When a child takes a break for several months, it is difficult to retain the skills previously acquired.

- **PHYSICAL FITNESS:** Children who are confined to the house during the winter months need to have a way to physically relieve stress and to further develop motor skills. Swimming is one of the best ways to do this. Also, children who are physically active get a boost to their immune systems. As with any other activity, there are steps parents can take to maintain optimum health for their children.



Remember to dry off and dress your child before leaving the swim facility. Bring a blow dryer to dry your child's hair after class. Relax and rest assured — your child is benefiting from gaining skills and strength in a sport which will be enjoyed for a lifetime.

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