

# Summer Safety Tip – Pool and Water Safety

Drowning is a serious threat. In Canada men aged 18-49 years have the highest drowning rate. Most drownings occur when they are swimming or boating. Over 80% of the men who drowned while boating were not wearing lifejackets and 40% had consumed alcohol.

Men are not the only ones at risk. An estimated 58 children under the age of 14 drown each year in Canada and another 140 are hospitalized for near-drowning. According to Safe Kids Canada, drowning is the second leading cause of injury-related death to Canadian children aged 1-4. Follow these tips to keep you and your family safe from drowning:

- Don't lose sight of your kids in or around water. Most incidents happen when children are near water during a momentary lapse in adult supervision. Whether they are playing in, around or even walking by water - keep them close and supervise your children at all times. If you must leave the area for any reason, take them with you. In fact, why not play it safe and use the buddy system for people of all ages!
- Fence off access to the pool with self-closing, self-latching gates, with fencing that is difficult for curious young children to climb.
- When boating or doing any water sports, everyone must use approved personal floatation devices (PFDs).
- Do not rely solely on floatation devices or water wings to keep children safe. They could deflate or come off. This also applies to adults who are not strong swimmers - do not rely on "pool noodles" or flutter boards as floatation devices.
- Do not drink alcoholic beverages while on the water, or if you intend to go on the water.
- Learn the safety rules for boating and other water activities before you venture out on the water.

Source: CCOHS