

# NEWS RELEASE



For more information, contact:  
Gail Wade  
252 535-8111  
[gwade@halifaxrmc.org](mailto:gwade@halifaxrmc.org)

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## **TIPS FOR SAFE SWIMMING THIS HOLIDAY**

**With several accidental drowning deaths in the area and the upcoming holiday weekend, now is a good time to brush up on tips for safe activities in the water.**

Halifax Regional wants to remind the community of the importance of following good common sense in safe swimming and holiday activities.

If you are at the lake, river or ocean, take a few extra precautions:

- Parents should keep a close eye on their children and insist on life jackets for children who can't swim. Use the "Buddy" system. Never swim alone.
- Know your limits. Cold water, currents and other conditions on the open water can challenge swimmers. Start out slowly and don't swim too far from shore.
- Be mindful of snakes and other dangerous animal life.
- Be aware of steep drop-offs in water depth in lakes.
- Test the water depth before you dive in. Diving into water that's too shallow may lead to neck injuries or paralysis.
- Heed warnings. Don't swim in water known to be polluted. The risk of exposure in lakes and ponds is higher after heavy rains when bacteria levels are elevated.
- Don't fight a strong current. If you get caught in a current, swim parallel to the shore until you feel the current relax—then swim gradually toward shore.
- Stay within designated swimming areas. These areas are more likely to be free of weeds, rocky underwater terrain and other dangers. If you can, swim in an area that has a lifeguard.

Here's some additional information:

- When in extreme heat, stay hydrated, wear a hat and take frequent rests.
- Jet skis. Follow rules of the lake. No horseplay and watch for others around you. Wear a lifejacket.

- Wear sunscreen.
- Carry first aid equipment, including band aids, bandages and antiseptics.
- Know where the nearest hospital Emergency Room is and directions.

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**About Halifax Regional-**

*Halifax Regional Medical Center is licensed for 206 beds, including psychiatric and nursery. A non-profit organization, Halifax Regional is fully accredited by the Joint Commission. For more information, visit [www.halifaxregional.us](http://www.halifaxregional.us).*