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## DOH-Orange Promotes Drowning Prevention During National Water Safety Month



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**Orlando, Fla.** – As May is National Water Safety Month, the Florida Department of Health in Orange County (DOH-Orange) raises awareness on drowning prevention and shares tips to help Floridians and visitors enjoy the state's many lakes, rivers, beaches, and pools safely.

Water safety is very important in Florida due to the widespread access to water. Children ages 1-4 years-old are more likely to drown in a home swimming pool than children ages 5-19 years-old, who are more likely to drown in natural bodies of water. Learning and following water safety rules helps keep everyone safe and lets people enjoy water recreation without the danger of drowning. Whether you are a parent or a community group member, everyone plays a role in [drowning prevention](#). By teaching others to stay safe, we can help prevent accidents and save lives.

### Water Safety Tips

- Always keep your eyes on children in and around water, including pools and open bodies of water. Actively supervising and giving children your undivided attention when they are in or around water can help prevent drownings.
- **Never** leave a child alone around water.
- If your child is missing, check other pools or surrounding bodies of water.
- Use barriers around water, including fences, self-closing/self-latching gates, and secure doors with alarms. Barriers help prevent young children from wandering into bodies of water, including lakes, pools, ponds, and more.
- Have a phone nearby in case you need to call 9-1-1 in an emergency.
- Open cuts or wounds should not be immersed in water; if there's bacteria in the water, it can enter the body through a cut or wound.
- If a cut or wound happens when in the water, it should be washed with clean, running water and soap and covered with a clean, dry waterproof bandage.

### Beach and Lake Swimming

Swimming in open water is different than swimming in a pool. Even the strongest swimmer can get into trouble swimming in open water. Here are some tips for swimming at the beach or lake:

- **Swim It:** Always swim with a buddy, and when safety flags and signs give it the all-clear to do so.

- **Shore It:** If you have a weakened immune system, a cut on your skin, or don't have a buddy to swim with, stay on dry land.
- **Dodge It:** If you encounter animals that live near or in the water, stay away. Also, do not drink, swim, wade, use personal watercrafts, or come into contact with waters where there are visible algal blooms like red tide and blue-green algae. For current information on red tide or blue-green algae, please visit [Protecting Florida Together](#) or the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's [Algal Bloom Dashboard](#).

For more information, contact DOH-Orange at 407-723-5004.

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