

LAKEs, RIVERs AND PONDs

SAFETY TIPS

WHO'S AT RISK

The majority of drownings in the U.S., for all ages, occur in oceans, lakes, ponds and rivers.

It is estimated that 85 percent of boating-related drownings could have been prevented if the victim had been wearing a personal floatation device – a life jacket.

SAFE SWIMMING

Swim with a partner or a group. Swimming in numbers dramatically reduces the risk of injury and drowning.

Avoid swift-moving water and currents. They can pose great risk to even expert swimmers.

Don't overestimate your ability to swim, and know your capacity for rescuing another person.

Never dive in cloudy or murky water. Strictly obey all "No Diving" signs. They're meant to prevent you from diving into an unsafe body of water, not to keep you from having fun.

PERSONAL FLOATATION DEVICE

The sizing of life jackets is based on body weight and chest. A life jacket should be adjusted to fit snugly. A properly fitted life jacket will not ride higher than the wearer's ears or mouth. A life jacket should be tested in the water to check that it can hold the wearer's weight and that he or she can swim comfortably.

Young children and weak or non-swimmers should wear a life jacket in and around the water.

The best life jacket is the one you will wear.

When boating, a life jacket must be present for each person on board and must be readily accessible.

Best practice is to always wear your life jacket.

BOATING SAFETY

Tell someone where you plan to boat / fish and when you plan to return.

Never mix alcohol with boating. Alcohol and drugs impair your balance, blur your vision, impact your coordination, impair your judgment and slow reaction time.

A boat operator with a blood alcohol concentration above 0.10 percent is estimated to be more than 10 times more likely to die in a boating accident than an operator with zero blood alcohol concentration (U.S. Coast Guard Boating Safety Division)

Maintain working safety gear on your boat. Safety gear would include a fire extinguisher, first aid kit, extra life jackets, whistle, life ring and a flashlight.

For more information about Wisconsin boating regulations, consult the current Wisconsin Boating Regulations and Handbook.

For more information, contact Ministry Saint Joseph's Hospital injury prevention coordinator, 715.387.9600 or amy.schmidt@ministryhealth.org.

Source: American Trauma Society



The Region's ONLY Adult and Pediatric Trauma Center