

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY SAFETY CHECKLISTS

SWIMMING (OPEN WATER)

Swimming is the movement through water without artificial assistance, and can be recreational or competitive. Open-water swimming involves both recreational and competitive swimming in outdoor waters not restricted to a swimming pool, such as a lake or the ocean.

Risk Factor Rating

4

General Learning Outcome

The student will demonstrate safe and responsible behaviours to manage risks and prevent injuries in physical activity participation and for daily living.

Risk Management Strategies*

Safety information and recommendations contained in this safety checklist are believed to reflect best practice to reduce risk. The suggested risk management strategies are considered minimum standards for physical activity in an organized or formal setting. They may not apply to all situations (e.g., home-based, recreational, or modified activities), and more stringent safety standards may be applied by instructors/coaches/program leaders of OUT-of-class physical activities in organized programs.

Instruction

Note: The amount and level of instruction/directions required by the student may vary based on circumstances such as the student's personal experience, skill level, and physical condition. The use of media resources, such as books and instructional videos, may replace direct instruction if deemed appropriate and safe.

Instruction is received from an experienced swimmer with the following qualifications:

1. NLS Lifeguard Certificate OR Bronze Cross
2. Current First Aid Qualifications:
 - a) St. John Emergency First Aid Certificate, OR
 - b) Canadian Red Cross Emergency First Aid, OR
 - c) Lifesaving Society Canadian Swim Patrol Program, Star Patrol, OR
 - d) Canadian Ski Patrol First Aid Certificate

All sessions are conducted in a safe environment, with students being aware of the potential risks involved in swimming

Swimming safety rules and emergency procedures are learned as part of the instructional program

Skills/movements are learned in proper progression

All screening and testing is initially done in shallow water

Each session is conducted with a proper warm-up, cool-down, and appropriate fitness work

Drinking water is available and consumed as needed

* See camping checklists for safety information when camping overnight.

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Supervision

Note: The level of supervision is provided as is appropriate, depending on various factors such as level of risk, intensity, accessibility, experience, and skill.

Recommended level of supervision: **on-site supervision**

Minimum of one instructor/supervisor/participant has:

1. NLS Lifeguard Certificate, OR
2. Current First Aid Qualifications:
 - a) St. John Emergency First Aid Certificate, OR
 - b) Canadian Red Cross Emergency First Aid, OR
 - c) Canadian Ski Patrol First Aid Certificate.

Safety rules and procedures are enforced

Emergency action plan is in place to deal with accidents/injuries

Process for the accounting of the students must be in place

Buddy system is in place

Each instructor/supervisor has a whistle or other signaling device

Supervisor is in a motorized support boat, if possible, within easy reach of the swimmer

Facility/Environment

Local weather conditions, forecast, and windchill are checked prior to outdoor session

Swimming area must be free of hazards/debris and unsuspecting currents

Swimming area is clearly marked

Safety rules/regulations are posted

Electrical equipment is properly grounded and away from water

Equipment

Equipment to be used is suitable and in good condition

Standard water safety equipment is available (e.g., ring buoys, reaching poles, spinal boards, etc.)

First aid kit and phone are available

Clothing/Footwear

Suitable swimwear is worn

Device for preventing hair from obstructing vision is worn (e.g., elastic band or swim cap)

Jewelry is removed or secured if safety is a concern

Eyewear is removed or secured

Goggles are recommended for open-water swimming

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Other Considerations

The student has completed a regular medical checkup and a medical history prior to starting the program

The student has submitted the signed Parent Declaration and Consent & Student Declaration Form (student under 18) or Student Declaration Form (student 18 and over) prior to beginning the program

Registration in an accident insurance plan is encouraged

Students who suffer an injury are referred to appropriate medical personnel for treatment and rehabilitation, and should not return to training until cleared by a qualified medical professional

The activity is suitable to the student's age, ability, mental condition, and physical condition

The student demonstrates self-control at all times and avoids any behaviour deemed inappropriate

The student's choice of this activity as part of the OUT-of-class component of the physical education/health education course has been presented to the parent/guardian (student under 18 years of age) and to the teacher

