

# **Govern de les Illes Balears**

Ministry of Health

Directorate General of Public Health and Consumer Affairs

Article 14 of Royal Decree 742/2013 of September 27 regarding the technical-sanitary criteria for swimming pools and public information, stipulates that swimming pools' owners must make informational materials available to the users in accessible places that are easy to see. Such materials must contain information on the prevention of drowning, traumatic brain injuries and spinal cord injuries and, in case of open-air swimming pools, also on protection against sunlight.

The Environmental Health Service of the Directorate General of Public Health and Consumer Affairs has compiled a series of recommendations than can be provisionally released waiting for the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality to prepare these informational materials according to the first additional provision of the before mentioned Royal Decree.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS TO AVOID DROWNINGS, TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURIES AND SPINAL CORD INJURIES AT SWIMMING POOLS**

1. Avoid swimming pool drains.
2. Check thoroughly the depth of the water before you dive in. Do not dive in places where the depth is unknown, since it could be less deep as you first thought and it could lead to serious injuries or a possible spinal cord injury.
3. Avoid jumping into the pool from inappropriate places such as trees, balconies or other inappropriate spaces.
4. Get slowly into the water or stand in it several times before you dive in.
5. When diving, extend your arms to the front to protect your head and neck. A bad landing from a high spot can cause a serious injury, even though you land in the water.
6. Watch the children all the time when they are close to recreational waters, even when the quantity of water is small.

7. Avoid alcohol consumption before you carry out any activity in or close to the water.

8. In general, you also have to be careful with stomach cramps. We recommend you to have a shower before you get into the water so that your organism can get used to the temperature. This will prevent from stomach cramps and further complications.

9. Do not jump onto other people in the water.

10. On the other hand, in case of accident and when facing the necessity to pick up or touch the victim, it is very important to immobilise his/her neck, to avoid spinal movements and to ask a professional to move the injured person. You cannot carry the victim in a utility vehicle. Always remember that many people will sit on a wheelchair for the rest of their lives because they ignored the before mentioned recommendations.

## **REFERENCES**

Norman n ., Vicenten j. ( 2008 ). Protecting children and youths in water recreation: safety guidelines for services providers. Amsterdam: European child safety alliance, eurosade.

Decalogue for the prevention of spinal cord injuries and brain injuries in bathing areas. Federation of Associations of People with Physical and Organic Disabilities in the Autonomous Community of Madrid (Famma).

Before diving in... use your head!. Spinal Cord Injuries Unit.  
Cruces Hospital.

<http://www.msssi.gob.es/ciudadanos/saludamblaboral/planaltastemp/2009/recomendacionesestivales.htm> # 3