

## **Pool Safety**

At least 300 children under the age of 5 drown each year in swimming pools in the U.S. alone. Most young children who drown in pools wander out of the house and fall into the pool. Because of this, pool safety is important all year round.

### ***Top 5 Pool Safety Tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics***

1. Never leave your children alone in or near the pool. An adult who knows CPR should supervise at all times.
2. Practice "touch supervision" with children under 5. This means that an adult is within arm's length of the child at all times.
3. Remove all toys from the pool after use so that children are not tempted to reach for them.
4. After children finish swimming, secure the pool so that they cannot get back in.
5. Do not use air-filled "swimming aids" as substitutes for approved life vests.

If possible, the AAP recommends waiting until your children are at least 5 years old before putting a pool in your yard. Even if your children know how to swim, it does not ensure they will be safe in the water.

### ***What Moms Can Do about Pool Safety***

Install a fence, such as the Baby Guard mesh pool fence, that's at least four feet high around all four sides of the pool. This fence should completely separate the pool from the house and play area of the yard.

As an added precaution, use a pool alarm like the Safety Turtle Pool Alarm (\$249). A power safety cover that meets the standards of the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) may add to the protection of your children, but should not be used in place of the fence between your house and the pool.

Never use a pool with its pool cover partially in place, since children may become entrapped under it. Remove the cover completely.

Keep a portable phone, shepherd's hook (a long pole with a hook on the end), and life preserver handy.

There have been increased reports of "dry" or "secondary" drowning in the news, causing moms to be concerned about their kids' safety even after they leave the pool. Dry or secondary drowning occurs when water that has been inhaled damages the inside surface

of the lungs, collapses the alveoli, and causes edema in the lungs with a reduced ability to exchange air. This may cause death up to 72 hours after a near-drowning incident.

Pediatrician Dr. Cara Natterson says, "Pool safety is supposed to be about being in the water, so the idea of secondary drowning is terrifying because it is even more beyond a parent's control. In order for a child to have a secondary drowning episode, he must get water into his lungs. This means that he will cough or choke a little or do something to indicate that the fluid has gone down the wrong way. If you are watching your child closely and none of these things has happened, you can feel fairly reassured that there is no risk of secondary drowning. On the other hand, if you do see some of these behaviors, and certainly if your child complains of difficulty breathing after swimming, it is much better to be safe than sorry."

Dr. Natterson says cases of secondary drowning are rare.

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### ***Related Momlogic Stories about Pool Safety***

1. [Death by "Dry" Drowning](#)
2. [This Could Save Your Kid's Life](#)
3. [Summer Safety 101](#)

### ***Additional Resources for Pool Safety***

- [American Academy of Pediatrics](#)
- [US Consumer Product Safety Commission](#)
- [The Association of Pool & Spa Professionals](#)