

**Water Rescue Water Contact Rescue Guidelines**

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## References:

“Lifeguarding Today”, American Red Cross, Published by Mosby-Year Book Publishing Company, St. Louis, MO, 1995.

**Information Sheet #1**

TOPIC: ACCESSING IN WATER VICTIMS

INTRODUCTION: Basic skills for simple entry and access to victim.

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**Water Entry** (Walk in or Lower Self Into Water if Able - Don't Jump Unless Have To)

Stride Jump - 5 ft Deep Water; Height <3 ft

Lean Slightly Forward and Step into Water

Enter With One Leg Forward, One Leg Back; Scissor Kick When in Water

Compact Jump - 5 ft Deep Water; Height > 3 ft

Jump Outward With Knees Bent and Feet Flat (Don't Point Toes)

Helicopter Entry (10-10) - Deep Water, 10 kts Forward Speed, 10 ft Height

Hold Life Jacket Secure With One Hand, Goggles to Face With Other

Jump Outward With Knees Slightly Bent and Feet Flat (Don't Point Toes)

Rotate in Air to Land in Water With Back Facing Direction of Helo

Hold Breath Before Entry, Water Will Fold Body Slightly

Bob to Surface From Lifejacket Floatation

Signal OK to Helo Crew and Others in Water

**Swimming to Victim**

Modified Crawl or Breast Stroke, Floatation Under Chest (Head Out of Water)

Slow Down as Approach Victim

**Surface Dives**

Feet First Surface Dive

Press Downward With Hand and Kick to Raise Body Out of Water

Keep Legs Straight, Together and Point Toes

Sweep Hands Upwards Until Reach Desired Depth

May Tuck Your Body, Roll to Horizontal Position and Swim Underwater

Head First Surface Dive

Plunge One Arm Downward, Bend at Hips, Tuck Chin to Chest

Bring Other Arm Down to Extended Arm

Lift Legs Out of Water

## Information Sheet #2

TOPIC: CONTACT RESCUES

INTRODUCTION: Basic contact of non-spinal water victims.

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### **Towing (Distressed Swimmer)**

Give Victim Floatation and Tow Behind

### **Surface Victim Rescue - Rescuer Grabs (Active and Passive Victim)**

Approach From Rear; Rescuer Head to Side (in Case Victim Leans Back)

Reach Under Arms, Grab Shoulders (Position Floatation Between Chest / Back)

Lean Victim Back and Keep Their Face Out of Water

Move to Safety; Can Sidestroke if Able; Remember to Talk to Victim

### **Submerged Victim Rescue**

Feet First Surface Dive to Position Behind Victim

Reach One Arm Across Victim's Chest; Pull Floatation Down With Other Arm

Pull Victim to Surface Then Proceed As Surface Rescue

### **Multiple Victim (Ask for Total Number of People - Be Sure You Account for Everyone)**

Grasp 1<sup>st</sup> Victim as Surface Victim Rescue

2<sup>nd</sup> Victim Lays on Top of 1<sup>st</sup> (Try to Keep Face of Both Victims Out of Water)

**Information Sheet #3**

TOPIC: REMOVAL OF VICTIM FROM WATER

INTRODUCTION: Basic techniques for removing person from water.

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**Lifts (Out of Water) - Be Careful of Victims Head As Remove From Water**

One Person Lift

Rotate Victim Till Face Toward Deck

Support Victim With Knee; Reach Under Victim Armpits and Grasp Deck

Place Victim's Hands One on Top of Other on Deck

Rescuer Holds Victims Hands in Place and Climbs Out of Water

Grasp Both of Victims Wrists and Lift (Till Hips / Thighs Are Out of Water)

Pull Victim's Legs Out of Water (Be Careful Not to Twist Victims Back)

Two Person Lift - Same as One Person Lift Except for

2<sup>nd</sup> Rescuer Supports Victim With 1<sup>st</sup> Rescuer Climbs Out of Water

Each Rescuer Grasps One of Victim's Wrists and Lifts

*(Note: If two hands are available, better to grab wrist with one hand, armpit with other to avoid two people disjuncting limb accidentally. Also, place foot under victim forehead when lying victim down, so nose doesn't hit ground.)*

**Out of Water Assists**

Walking Assist

Grasp Wrist of One of Victim's Arm Across Your Neck and Shoulders

Wrap Your Free Arm Across Victim's Back or Waist to Provide Support

Maintain Firm Grip on Victim and Help Victim Walk to Shore

Beach Drag

Stand Behind Victim, Grasp Under Armpits (Support Head On Forearms)

Walk Backward and Drag Victim Toward Shore

Drag Victim Completely From Water (At Least Head and Shoulders Out)

Front and Back carry (2 Persons)

Reach Under Victim's Armpits and Grasp Wrists (Left Hand on Left Wrist)

2<sup>nd</sup> Rescuer's Back to Victim and Hold Victim's Legs (Hold Under Knees)

Everyone Facing Same Direction and Carry Victim

### Information Sheet #4

TOPIC: USE OF RESCUE BOARDS

INTRODUCTION: Basic use of a rescue board or similar floating device.

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#### **Distressed Swimmer**

Approach From Side, Grasp Victim's Wrist and Slide Off Board on Far Side  
Have Victim Grasp Far Side of Board and Assist Victim Onto Board  
Position Victim On Stomach Facing Bow; Lie Between Victim's Legs  
Paddle Board Toward Shore

#### **Unconscious Person**

Approach From Side, Grasp Victim's Wrist and Slide Off Board on Far Side  
As Slide Off Board Flip the Board Toward You  
While Holding Victim in Place, Kneel on Near Edge and Grasp Far Edge  
Flip Victim Onto Board as You Roll Board Toward You  
Position Victim On Stomach Facing Bow; Lie Between Victim's Legs  
Paddle Board Toward Shore

## Information Sheet #5

TOPIC: SPINAL PRECAUTIONS

INTRODUCTION: In water manual stabilization of suspected spinal problems

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### **Head Splint Technique** - Face Down Victim At Or Near Surface

Approach From Side

Grasp Victim's Arms Midway Between Shoulder and Elbow

Gently Squeeze Victim's Arms Against Victim's Head

Rotate Victim - Push Closer Arm Underwater and Pull Other Arm Across Surface

Position Victim Face Up With Head In Crook of Rescuer's Arm

Victim's Body In Line With Head

### **Head and Chin Support** - Face Up or Face Down Victim (Need > 3 ft Deep Water)

Approach From Side

One Hand on Victim's Lower Jaw and One on Back of Victim's Neck

Rescuer Squeezes Forearms Against Victim's Head and Back

If Victim Facedown

Rotate Victim Toward You While You Submerge

Roll Under Victim While Turning Victim Over

Surface on Far Side of Victim - Victim Will Be Face Up

### **Position Victim for Best Removal From Water**

Move to Calmer Water if Needed / Able

Create Barrier Next to Victim For Waves / Current if Needed / Able

Position Victim's Head Upstream So Water Aligns With Body

Move to Shallow Water if Needed / Able

**Information Sheet #6**

TOPIC: IN WATER SPINAL IMMOBILIZATION

INTRODUCTION: Spinal immobilization in water using long board (backboard)

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**Securing to Backboard** (At Least Two Rescuers, Extra Rescuers Help Hold Board)

Bring Victim to Easiest / Safest Work Area (Shallow, No Current, No Waves, ?)

1<sup>st</sup> Rescuer Holds Victim Head, 2<sup>nd</sup> Rescuer Submerges Board Under Victim

For Head and Chin Support

1<sup>st</sup> Rescuer Withdraws Arm From Beneath Victim and Puts It Under Board

For Head Splint Technique

1<sup>st</sup> Rescuer Moves Arm Under Victim's Head While 2<sup>nd</sup> Assumes C-Spine

2<sup>nd</sup> Rescuer Holds With Head and Chin Support (One Hand Under Board)

Rescuer Not Holding Victim's Head

When Board Raised Supports Backboard Against Chest

Squeezes Sides of Board With Arms

Assume Victim C-Spine by Placing a Hand on Each Side of Victim's Head

Other Rescuer(s) Secures Victim to Board (Armpits / Chest, Hips, Thighs, Head)

Make Sure Straps Don't Go Over Runners

**Removing Victim From Water on Backboard** (At Least Two Rescuers)

Head End of Board Toward Shore / Deck / Boat

One Rescuer on Each Side, Lift Head End Onto Surface

One Rescuer Gets Out of Water - Slides Board Along Edge Away From Water

Other Rescuers Help Stabilize Board and Lift From Water

**Information Sheet #7**

TOPIC: GUIDELINES FOR SURVIVAL SWIMMING IN CALM WATER

INTRODUCTION: Methods for increasing in water survival for non-swiftwater

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See Swim Test and Personnel Qualification for Minimum Swimming Requirements

**Wear Lifejacket When Around Water****Increase Chance of Rescue**

- Signal for Help – Use Strobe, Flares, Smoke, Waving, ...
- Stay in Group – Use Buddy System, Maintain Visual Contact With Group
- Periodic Status Check of All Personnel
- Get Rid of Clothing That Sinks (Turnouts, Steel Toe Boots, ...)

**Get Out of Water if Able** – Minimize Exposure

- Swim Short Distance to Shore or Safety (Do Not Chase Boat)
- Use Floating Items to Get Body Out of Water (Overturned Boat, Debris, ...)

**Use Floatation Source(s) For Buoyancy** – If Unable to Get Out of Water

- Lifejacket
- Floating Item(s)
- Clothing – Trap Air In Clothing (Wet Clothing Periodically to Reduce Air Loss)
  - Trousers - Remove and Hold Securely Onto (May Sink)
    - Zip Up and Tie Knot In Each Leg Near Cuff
    - Position Legs Over Shoulders, Hold Open Waist Over Head
    - Pull Downward Trapping Air in Each Leg
    - Gather Waist Under Water and Hold in Hand

**Reduce Heat Loss**

- Keep Head Out of Water (Large Heat Loss Capability)
- Expose Less of Body to Water (Less Water Circulation)
  - Body Positioning
    - Heat Escape Lessening Position (Use Fetal Position)
    - Huddle With Other People – Front of Body Contact
  - Clothing – Trap Layer of Water
  - Reduce Activity – Don't Trash About, Remain Still
  - Can Exercise Mildly As Needed But Not to Exhaustion