



FACTS ABOUT WATER SAFETY AND DROWNING PREVENTION

The following data, along with other research on drowning prevention and water safety can be found on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's, the World Health Organization's and the American Academy of Pediatrics' websites:

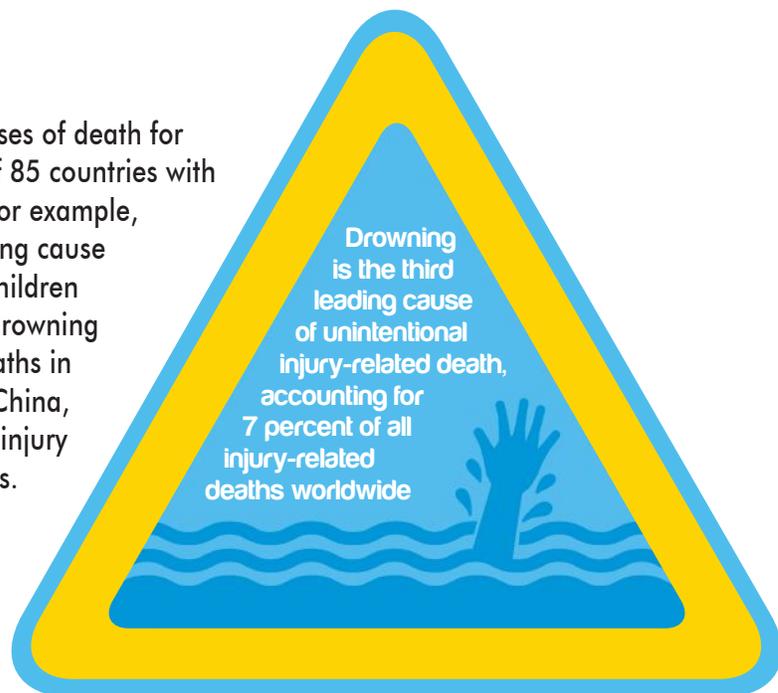
<https://www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationalSafety/Water-Safety/waterinjuries-factsheet.html>

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs347/en/>

<https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/143/5/e20190850>

How big is the problem?

- Drowning is one of the top 5 causes of death for people aged 1-14 years for 48 of 85 countries with data meeting inclusion criteria. For example, in Australia drowning is the leading cause of unintentional injury death in children aged 1-3 years. In Bangladesh, drowning accounts for 43 percent of all deaths in children aged 1-4 years. And in China, drowning is the leading cause of injury death in children aged 1-14 years.
- According to a research study conducted by the American Red Cross in 2020, more than half (56%) of kids ages 4-17 cannot perform the basic water safety skills they need to save their own life.
- According to the CDC, in 2017, drowning claimed the lives of almost 1,000 U.S. children. From 2005-2014, there were an average of 3,536 fatal unintentional drownings (non-boating related) annually in the United States—about ten deaths per day. An additional 332 people died each year from drowning in boating-related incidents.
- In 2015, an estimated 360,000 people died from drowning, making drowning a major public health problem worldwide. Injuries account for over 9 percent of total global mortality. Drowning is the 3rd leading cause of unintentional injury death, accounting for 7 percent of all injury-related deaths.
- About one in five people who die from drowning within the United States are children 14 and younger. For every child who dies from drowning, another five receive emergency department care for nonfatal submersion injuries.



- According to the CDC, drowning is also a significant source of morbidity for children. In 2017, an estimated 8,700 children younger than 20 years of age visited a hospital emergency department for a drowning event, and 25 percent of those children were hospitalized or transferred for further care.

Who is most at risk in the United States?

- **Males:** Nearly 80 percent of people who die from drowning in the United States are male.
- **Children:** Children ages 1 to 4 have the highest drowning rates. In 2014, among children 1 to 4 years old who died from an unintentional injury, one-third died from drowning. Among children ages 1 to 4, most drownings occur in home swimming pools. Drowning is responsible for more deaths among children 1-4 than any other cause except congenital anomalies (birth defects). Among those 1-14, fatal drowning remains the second-leading cause of unintentional injury-related death behind motor vehicle crashes.
- **Minorities:** For the period 2013–2017, the highest drowning death rates were seen in white male children 0 to 4 years of age (3.44 per 100,000), American Indian and/or Alaskan native children 0 through 4 years (3.58), and African American male adolescents 15 to 19 years of age (4.06 per 100,000).

Factors such as access to swimming pools, the desire or lack of desire to learn how to swim and choosing water-related recreational activities may contribute to the racial differences in drowning rates. Available rates are based on population, not on participation. If rates could be determined by actual participation in water-related activities, the disparity in minorities' drowning rates compared to whites would be much greater.

What has research found?

- Participation in formal swimming lessons can reduce the risk of drowning among children ages 1-4 years. Brenner RA, Taneja GS, Haynie DL, Trumble AC, Qian C, Klinger RM, Klevanoff MA. *Association between swimming lessons and drowning in childhood: A case-control study. Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine* 2009;163(3):203-10.