



Catholic Healthcare West

Ask the Expert
Arizona Republic

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Q: At what age should I teach my daughter how to swim?

A: Adult supervision is the best approach in the prevention of drowning, but it's never too early to teach your child to swim, especially in Arizona. You can introduce your child to the water when they are six months old, and some can swim by the time they are a few years old. However, every child is different and you may want to talk to your daughter's pediatrician to see if she is ready.

It's important to remember that teaching your child how to swim is no substitute for adult supervision. According to the Arizona Department of Health Services, drowning is the number one cause of death in our state among children ages one to four.

The Drowning Prevention Coalition of Arizona provides the following water safety tips:

- Never leave your child unattended around water – this includes the pool and the bathtub.
- Keep toys away from the pool.
- Move tables and chairs away from the pool fence.
- Keep a phone near the pool.
- Mount life-saving devices near the pool.
- Make sure a doggie door does not lead into the pool area.
- Do not leave out standing buckets of water.
- Install safety latches on your toilets if you have a toddler.
- Learn how to administer CPR, mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, and other lifesaving techniques. To administer CPR correctly you must be properly trained.

For a list of swim lessons and locations throughout the Valley, visit the Drowning Prevention Coalition of Arizona's website at www.preventdrownings.org.

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