

Keeping Summer Swimming Safe (*Interview Transcripts*)

Bill Walsh, M.D., Chief Medical Officer, OSF HealthCare

“Swimming is an excellent exercise. It is a full body exercise that is typically safe and effective. It’s easy on your joints and a great way to stay in shape and to get exercise in the summer. However, it is not without risk.” (:14)

Bill Walsh, M.D., Chief Medical Officer, OSF HealthCare

“If your children are going in the water, you should watch them all the time and not rely on a lifeguard to watch your child in a pool with 50 other kids. You need to watch your children in the water even if they can swim and even if they are not in deep water. It would not take long for your child to be injured or drown when in a pool unsupervised – we are talking about 15 to 30 seconds and it will be life changing.” (:31)

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“If you are going to be swimming, make sure you swim in an area that is public and monitored. If there are signs that say ‘no swimming’ – there are reasons for that sign. It is risky and could be life-threatening. So do not swim in those areas. Make sure you’re in a public area that is monitored. If there is a lifeguard on duty – even safer. Swim in the daylight hours so you can keep an eye on your party, and never swim alone.” (:32)

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“If you are involved in an incident where somebody is underwater for a period of time and there is any alteration of consciousness, bring them to an emergency department – even if they regain consciousness. If you pull someone out of the water and they are coughing and gagging and short of breath, or have any color change to their skin, bring them to an emergency department immediately.” (:22)