

COLD WATER SHOCK

Be Water Smart® – Avoid Cold Water Shock!

Cold Water Shock is a significant risk to people who work or recreate in, on, or near water.

- *Our breathing, muscle strength, coordination, and overall decision making are greatly affected by cold water, making drowning more likely for even the strongest of swimmers.*
- *It only takes 30 mins in cold water to experience hypothermia*
- *Many people don't wear a lifejacket because they think they can put it on after falling in. Cold water makes this extremely difficult.*

Canadian water is cold water all year round!

Fast Facts

- 60% of boaters drowned in water under 10°C (50°F)
- 34% of boaters drowned in water between 10°C and 20°C (50°F and 68°F)
- 43% of boaters who drowned were less than 2 meters (6.6 ft) from safety
- 90% of boaters who drowned were not wearing lifejackets
- The colder you get, the weaker you get; wearing a lifejacket greatly increases your chances of survival



COLD WATER SAFETY

Water Smart Facts

Surviving a Fall into Cold Water

Knowing these steps can increase your chances of survival from an unexpected fall into cold water:

- Fight the urge to panic
- Call for help.
- Remember the 1 : 10 : 1 principle:
 - 1 minute to get your breathing under control: this is how long it takes for your body to overcome its initial shock – try to float or lightly tread and keep your head above the water
 - 10 minutes of meaningful movement (towards shore, a boat, etc.): after 10 minutes your strength and dexterity are greatly reduced
 - 1 hour before you become unconscious due to hypothermia
- Get as much of your body out of the water as you can, if possible (if you're able to find something to float on or grab onto)



If Someone Else Falls into Cold Water

- DO NOT ATTEMPT A RESCUE
- Call 9-1-1 to initiate Emergency Services
- Verbally encourage them to calm down and focus on controlling their breathing
- Only if safe to do so, without putting yourself at risk of falling or being pulled into the water: assist them with a throwing or reaching assist (like a lifejacket or rope)
- If they are able to get out of the water, assist them in removing wet clothing and treat for hypothermia



LIFESAVING SOCIETY®
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SMART**®

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