

DROWNING SYMPTOMS AFTER LEAVING WATER? HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW.

Despite popular belief, drowning is not always synonymous with death, and it is also never "dry." Health experts define drowning as **"the process of experiencing respiratory impairment from submersion/immersion in liquid."**¹

In other words, a person can experience drowning symptoms from being fully beneath the water, or from water entering the airways another way, like from being splashed. Either way, **this respiratory impairment can be fatal, but most times it is not.**



When a person drowns, there are only three possible end results: **fatal drowning, nonfatal drowning with injury, and nonfatal drowning without injury.**²

WATCH OUTS

The best way to avoid drowning is to practice better overall water safety. **If your child has engaged in water play and you notice any of these warning signs afterward**, it could mean that water has been aspirated and has compromised the airways or lungs, or the brain may not be receiving enough oxygen.³ People who have drowned and showed minimal symptoms after leaving water will either get better or worse within 2-4 hours.



Trouble breathing



Chest pain



Acting unusual



Low energy



Extreme sleepiness



Persistent coughing



Irritability

There have been **no recorded cases** of completely normal, healthy children who suddenly died because they went swimming days earlier. **Symptoms that appear unexpectedly days later are likely unrelated to the drowning episode and should be evaluated as such.**²

ACT FAST



If you notice **behavior changes up to 4 hours** after a child has left water, seek medical help immediately.



A chest **X-ray may be needed to make an assessment**, and the child may need to be given oxygen and observed for a few hours.



In **most cases, the symptoms will improve** within a few hours and the patient will be released.

STATISTICS

Drowning is **fast, silent, and preventable.**

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, **drowning is responsible for more deaths among children ages 1-4** than any other cause of death except birth defects. It is also estimated that for each child who dies from drowning, **five more children receive emergency care for nonfatal submersion injuries.**⁴

The takeaway?

Nonfatal drownings are not rare. In fact, they happen more often than fatal drownings. So when symptoms show, even minimally, it is worth further medical intervention to avoid injury.¹

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