# Diving and Drownings: Pick Six

Water-related deaths are a sad part of every summer. The following stats are meant to bring awareness to just how often drowning deaths and diving-related injuries occur. There is also an important link to a blog post, *Drowning Doesn't Look Like Drowning*, that I highly recommend reading – it is eye-opening.

1. On average over 400 Canadians drown each year. In the U.S., that number tops 3,000 annually.
    - Young children ages 1 to 4 and men ages 15 to 44 are at the greatest risk of drowning.
    - A small child can disappear in seconds and can drown in only 1-2 inches (2 -7 cm) of water-enough to cover the mouth and nose.
2. Small children are the most vulnerable group for near drownings.
    - For every death, there are an estimated 4-5 additional near-drowning incidents, which require hospitalization and often result in varying degrees of brain damage.
    - Almost half of the children who drown do so within 25 yards of a parent or other adult.
    - In 10% of these drownings, the adult will actually watch them do it, having no idea it is happening. Read more on drowning here – you could save a life!
3. If you ever encounter someone who is drowning it's important to remember the correct order of action. The Red Cross Says: If you see a swimmer in distress,
    - First, shout for help.
    - Second, reach or throw a rescue or flotation device.
    - Third, call 9-1-1 if needed.
4. Diving is the 4$^{th}$ leading cause of spinal cord injury for men and the 5$^{th}$ for women, according to the National Spinal Cord Injury Statistical Center.
5. You can break their neck and/or suffer spinal cord injury from diving into water 5 feet (1.5 m) or less.
    - Just because you used to dive somewhere does not make

it safe. You may have grown, and underwater surfaces may have shifted.
    - Some injuries are caused by hitting the far side of a pool or swimming hole. Depth is not the only thing to be concerned about.
6. Young swimmers should be taught to dive into the minimum depth of 5 feet (1.5 m) from the earliest age.
    - Most of us are taught how to dive at an early age and taught in shallow water – 3-4 feet or less.
    - Few of us are taught that once get older (teens and beyond), it is unsafe to dive into such depths of water.
    - The dangers of shallow depth diving should be reinforced throughout the lives.

Sources:


- http://www.redcross.ca/training-and-certification/swimming-and-water-safety-tips-and-resources/take-the-canadian-red-cross-water-safety-quiz
- http://www.aquaticisf.org/diving.htm
- https://www.shepherd.org/resources/injuryprevention/diving