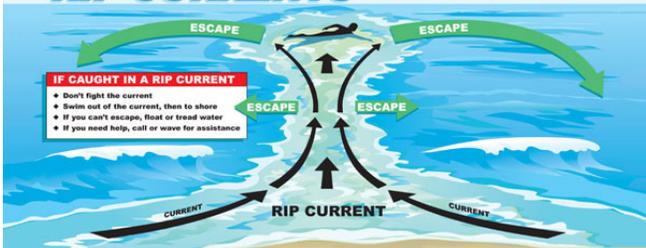


RIP CURRENTS Break the Grip of the Rip!



Rip currents are powerful currents of water moving away from shore. They can sweep even the strongest swimmer out to sea.

Rip Currents

Often called undertows, these powerful currents are formed when the ocean water rushes back to sea in a narrow path. Rip currents can pull even experienced swimmers away from shore. They may vary in duration, width and speed.

Rip currents may be visible as a difference in water color or in the waves. A rip current may have choppier waves or an offshore area of turbid water, along with foam or objects moving steadily seaward.

If you're caught in a rip current, don't panic or try to swim against the current. Swim parallel to the shore until you are out of the rip current. If you can't break out of the current, float calmly until it fades, then swim diagonally back to shore.



Beach Safety Tips: Your Guide to Beach Safety in the Myrtle Beach Area

With tens of thousands of people swimming along Myrtle Beach during the summertime, our area has an excellent safety record. It's important to take proper precautions whenever near water. Here are a few beach safety tips:

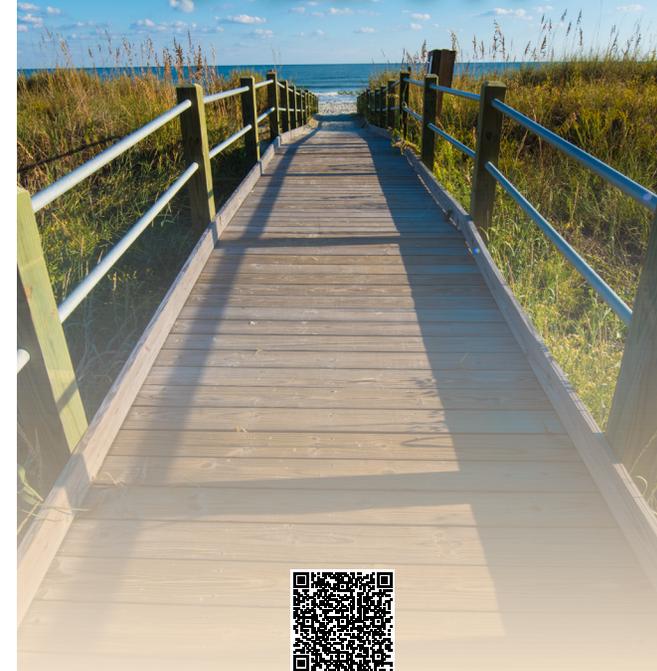
- Look for, read, and obey all beach safety flags
- Swim in areas with a lifeguard
- Listen and follow lifeguard's directions and warnings
- Swim with a buddy
- Swim sober
- Don't fight the current (signal for help!)
- Don't float where you can't swim
- Watch small children closely
- Don't swim or surf within 75 yards of piers
- Don't swim where people are fishing
- Don't dive into the surf (protect your neck!)
- Leash your boogie board or surfboard
- Ask a lifeguard about ocean water conditions
- Don't swim in public bodies of water if you have open wounds/cuts or a compromised immune systems
- Know the local rules and laws (visit the municipality's website for more info)



CheckMyBeach.com

THE MYRTLE BEACH AREA GUIDE TO SWIM AND BEACH SAFETY

Check *my* Beach



CheckMyBeach.com

*Produced by the Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce
in conjunction with the City of Myrtle Beach,
South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental
Control and Coastal Waccamaw Stormwater
Education Consortium.*

What does a swim advisory mean?



Check My Beach

www.CheckMyBeach.com

South Carolina's beach monitoring season begins May 1 and runs through October 1. The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) routinely collects samples at more than 120 locations. The cities of Myrtle Beach and North Myrtle Beach also routinely sample their ocean waters. If high numbers of pollutant bacteria are found, a **temporary** swim advisory is issued for that portion of the ocean.

Advisories do not mean that the beach is closed. Wading, fishing and shell collecting do not pose a risk. Advisories may be issued after heavy rainfalls when higher bacteria counts are detected and often last less than 24 hours. The advisory is lifted when sample results fall below the limit. Swimming in any public body of water is not recommended when you have an open cut, wound or compromised immune system.

For information on your specific beach, visit www.CheckMyBeach.com



Water Quality FAQ:

Does a short term swimming advisory at my favorite beach location mean that the water there is generally unsafe?

No. Swim advisories are for isolated spots at monitoring locations when swimming is not recommended. Most advisories are temporary – lasting only a day or two – for small swimming areas near the monitoring location.

What is tested in beach water monitoring samples?

Testing looks for enterococcus bacteria in the samples. Enterococcus bacteria indicate the likely presence of other pathogenic microbes. Elevated levels of this bacteria can indicate possible contamination at that location for a short period of time.

What's the best way to check for these swim advisories?

Visit www.CheckMyBeach.com and use the interactive tool to find your exact location on the beach. Check the most recent test results for that spot, along with information on all area beach access points and amenities.

Beach Flag System and Public Safety

Myrtle Beach has a specific set of beach flags to let beach-goers know about water conditions. Pictured here is a sign of the flag system. These flags fly from lifeguard stands to alert of any potential danger.



You'll also notice Public Safety and EMS personnel on the beach. During peak season, crews are on the beach to provide first aid and assist with any water-related emergencies. Lifeguard services provide watchful eyes and are ready to assist beachgoers and swimmers. While you're on the beach, these lifeguards and Public Safety personnel provide outstanding information resources on how to safely enjoy our beautiful coastline.