

Winter Dip Safety Guidance

Mitigating cold-water event risks

Your WaterAid Winter Dip is a cold-water event which involves immersion into water that's likely to be colder than 15 degrees Celsius.

Cold-water events can be considered a hazardous activity, with potential risk of Hypothermia, Sudden Immersion Syndrome (SIS) or Cold-Water Shock.

To prevent injury on the day it's advisably to;

- Complete a medical check before entering cold water
- Continue swimming through the seasons three to four times a week for a minimum of 2-3 minutes
- Enter water slowly at first in order to control breathing
- Warm up slowly after swimming
- Put dry warm clothes and a hat on after cold water swimming.

It's recommended that those partaking in cold water events are physically fit and in good health. Some known conditions can affect your ability to safely take part in the challenge. WaterAid recommends that you should obtain a Doctor's approval before participating in a cold-water event.

Your Winter Dip is not a race. We encourage those taking on a cold-water event; not to jump in, not to swim lengths or stay in the water for any extended period of time, to monitor your condition before and during the event and stop if your continued participation could create a risk of danger to yourself.

In order to cover yourself for personal accident, material loss or damage to personal property you are advised to take out personal insurance cover.

It's strongly advised not to consume alcohol, or any other substance that will impair your ability to take on the challenger safely.

Where to do your Winter Dip?

Due to the cold-water event risks noted above, we advise anyone taking on a Winter Dip to do so at a manned and safely managed location.

Such locations could be; outdoor swimming pools or lido's, open water swimming lakes, life guarded beaches or organised cold-water events (such as local Boxing Day dips etc.).

Ensuring your Winter Dip location is manned and safely managed means you'll be in safer hands should you encounter any cold-water related difficulties. It also means, you won't be putting yourself in undue danger in locations that are not suitable for swimming, or may be dangerous on a particular day due to weather/ tide conditions. Finally, you'll also be safe in the knowledge that you have permission from the land owner or council to enter the water at your chosen Winter Dip location.