

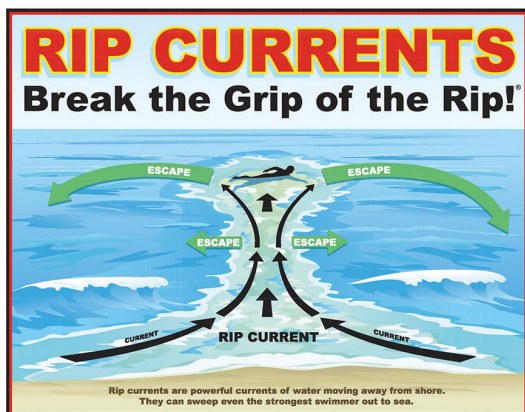
BEACH SAFETY

BE A SAFE SWIMMER

Swimming in the Gulf is much different than swimming in a pool. It is important to respect the strength of the sea and the marine life that lives there.

- **ALWAYS** check surf and weather conditions before heading to the beach and observe beach flags.
- Never swim alone. Always stay in groups. Don't wander too far from shore.
- Don't swim near piers, pilings and platforms. Exercise caution when swimming in areas between sandbars or near steep drop-offs.
- Do not swim in areas being used by fishermen. Avoid swimming in areas where schools of fish are present. Diving seabirds are good indicators of areas to avoid.
- Alcohol and swimming do not mix.
- Use extra caution when water is murky. Avoid being in the water during dusk, night time or twilight hours.
- Avoid wearing shiny jewelry and clothing.
- Stay informed of local weather and beach conditions.

BEWARE OF RIP CURRENTS



Rip currents are channelized currents of water flowing away from shore at surf beaches. They typically form at breaks in sandbars, and also near structures such as jetties and piers. If caught in a rip current:

- Remain calm. Fighting the rip current can exhaust you.
- Escape the current by swimming parallel to the shoreline. When free of the current, swim at an angle—away from the current—toward shore.
- If unable to escape by swimming, float or tread water. When the current weakens, swim at an angle away from the current toward the shore.
- If at any time you feel you will be unable to reach shore, draw attention to yourself: face the shore, call or wave for help.

To help someone else caught in a rip current, seek help from a lifeguard. If a lifeguard is not present, yell instructions on how to escape or throw the victim something that floats. Call 911 for further assistance.

FOR CURRENT SURF CONDITIONS

Gulf Shores
251-968-TIDE
GulfShoresAL.gov

Orange Beach
251-981-SURF
OrangeBeachAL.gov

UNDERSTAND AND OBSERVE BEACH FLAGS



Medium Hazard
Moderate Surf
and/or Currents



High Hazard
High Surf and/or
Strong Currents



**Dangerous
Marine Life**



**Water Closed
to the Public**

Under Gulf Shores & Orange Beach city ordinances, it is illegal to enter the Gulf of Mexico within the corporate limits of either city when two red flags are displayed.

PRACTICE SUN SAFETY

PROTECT YOUR SKIN Always wear a sunscreen appropriate for your skin type, paying special attention to face, nose, ears, shoulders and feet. Protect your lips as well. Most people don't realize how much sun they're getting until it's too late. Sunscreen should be applied at least 30 minutes prior to sun exposure and should be reapplied every two hours or after getting wet.

CHILDREN NEED EXTRA PROTECTION Liberally apply sunscreen 30 minutes prior to sun exposure. Make sure children wear sun hats and sunglasses. Re-apply sunscreen frequently, especially after swimming.

DRINK PLENTY OF WATER Even if you don't feel thirsty, your body needs water to keep cool. Avoid drinks with alcohol or caffeine, which can dehydrate you.

PROTECT YOUR EYES Ultra-violet (UV) rays can damage your eyes. Don't forget your sunglasses.

BEWARE OF HEAT STROKE Watch for hot, red and dry skin; changes in consciousness; rapid, weak pulse; and rapid, shallow breathing. If someone shows symptoms, call 911. Keep the victim lying down and cool the body by placing ice packs or cold packs on wrists, ankles, armpits and neck. Wet towels may also be used.

JELLYFISH RELIEF Use saltwater to wash the sting. Apply rubbing alcohol or vinegar to the sting area. Do not rub the sting area. If the victim experiences difficulty breathing or swallowing, seek immediate medical attention.

SUNBURN RELIEF Drink lots of water. Soak in a cool bath or apply cold compresses several times a day. Acetaminophen or Ibuprofen may help relieve pain and swelling, and aloe vera may help relieve the burn. Do not apply petroleum jelly or oil-based lotions.