

# 12 BAYS OF CHRISTMAS

An event being run by  
Les Bourgs Hospice

*concept credit to:  
the Marley & Sealey families*

## Cold Water Swimming tips

### 1 IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU



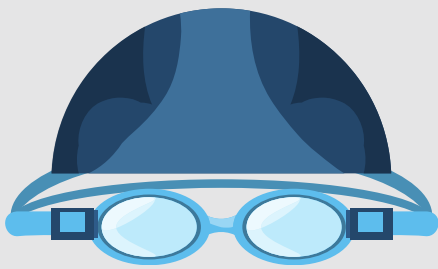
Each person will have a different cold water tolerance so it is important to focus on how you feel and not how long other people are staying in the water for. We have intentionally avoided setting a target number of strokes or distance to swim so if all you do is a dip to get wet or only tick off some of the bays on the list that's fine!

### 2 GET WARM



We know how important it is to get warm after a swim but have you thought about beforehand too? The cooler your core body temperature is before your swim the quicker (and colder) you will get afterwards.

### 3 WHAT KIT DO I NEED?



Each person will have their own preference on kit but if you are going for a dip, your festive bobble hat could help minimise the loss of heat from your head or if you are going for a longer swim a cap (or two!) should also help. Neoprene socks, gloves or booties are a good option for keeping extremities warmer and making the cold more bearable. If you want to wear a wetsuit then do!

### 4 AND BREATHE.....



Cold water can cause an intake of breath or quicker breathing so best to keep your face out of the water until you are breathing more normally. Try to take long, slow breaths to help you exhale (and not just take a sharp inhale). It can also cause cold water shock so it is not recommended that you jump or dive straight into water below 15 degrees centigrade.

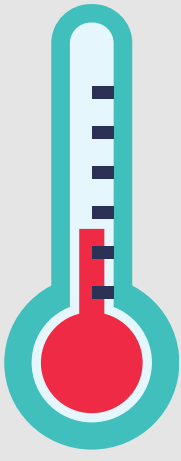
### 5 HYPOTHERMIA



If you start to think that the water is warm and you could stay in for hours it is time to get out! Cold can slow down your mental processing so if you are struggling to count from 1-10 and back again it is having an impact. Other signs to look out for are uncontrollable shivering or numbness and slurred speech. Please also keep an eye out for other swimmers who may not realise how much the cold has had an effect on them.

**6**

## AFTERDROP



Our bodies are clever things so when immersed in cold water a process called peripheral vasoconstriction helps protect our vital organs by focussing blood flow to our core. When we get out that process ends so the cold blood from your skin starts to cool down your core and your body temperature will continue to drop 15-20 minutes after your swim. It is important to use that time to get dry & dressed as quickly as you can.

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## AVOID A HOT SHOWER

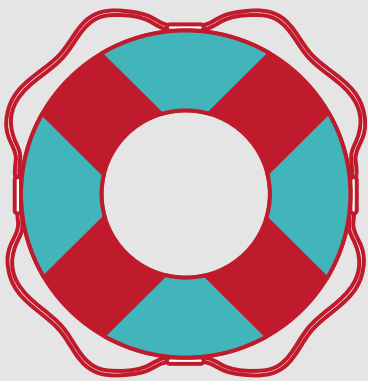


Tempting as it is to get straight out the water and jump into a hot shower it is important to wait until you have warmed up first. Hot water will speed up the effects of afterdrop, cooling your core down quicker and can make you feel faint. Instead try the following;

- layer up with clothes that are warm and easy to get on and have them ready to get out your bag in the order that you will need them.
- use a mat or extra towel on the floor to get your feet off the cold sand or pebbles.
- have a hot drink ready for after you've got dressed.
- wear your festive bobble hat to reduce losing more body heat.

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## SWIM SAFE



Whatever the time of year, whenever you are swimming it is important to remember a few things to help you stay safe;

- Do not swim alone.
- Do not swim in the dark.
- Check the weather and tide before you swim.
- Do not swim out of your comfort zone so if it is rough do not swim or perhaps head to another bay that is more sheltered.
- Do not swim out of your depth if you are not a strong swimmer or are unsure of how cold you will get. It is better to swim across a bay in shallow water than swimming out deeper.

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## HAVE FUN!



Thank you again for signing up to our 12 Bays of Christmas event. We hope you enjoy catching up with Friends and Family at the various bays. We would love to see some of your photos so don't forget to use #12baysofchristmas on any you post!

MERRY CHRISTMAS  
FROM ALL OF THE HOSPICE TEAM

X