

Safety information for snorkellers

The underwater environment is exciting and beautiful. It can however, be dangerous if you do not follow the instructions of your snorkelling supervisor or instructor.

- If you cannot swim or have not snorkelled before or have any concerns, talk to your snorkelling supervisor or snorkelling guide before entering the water.
- Be aware that snorkelling can be a strenuous physical activity even in calm water.
- Flotation devices are available for you to use.
- Follow the instructions of your snorkelling supervisors and lookouts.
- Snorkel in buddy pairs.
- Always stay in an area which allows your supervisor or instructor to offer close supervision.
- To avoid sunburn, use sunscreen and wear suitable clothing.
- Complete the medical declaration form that will be provided to you.

Snorkelling environment

- Take careful note of the environment in which you will be snorkelling. With the assistance of the snorkelling supervisor or instructor, identify boating channels, marine animals, wind and tide strength and direction.
- Identify and locate flotation devices such as buoys and rest stations.

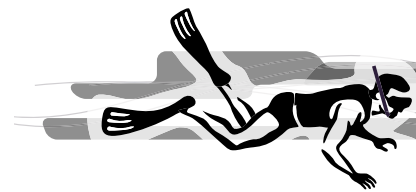
Dealing with problems

- Snorkelling can be a strenuous physical activity even in calm water and may increase the health and safety risks for persons suffering from:
 - any medical condition that may be made worse by physical exertion, for example, heart disease, asthma and some lung complaints.
 - any medical condition that can result in loss of consciousness, for example, some forms of epilepsy and some diabetic conditions.
 - asthma that can be brought on by cold water or salt water mist.
 - the person should tell the lookout, snorkelling supervisor or snorkelling guide if they have any concerns about any other medical condition.
- People over the age of 50 years are more likely to suffer from diagnosed and undiagnosed medical conditions that may be made worse by physical exertion, for example, heart disease and stroke.
- It is a good idea to practice snorkelling beside a platform, boat or in shallow water before venturing into more open deeper water.
- Take into consideration your own limitations when snorkelling. If in doubt wear a flotation device.
- Note the location and availability of life jackets, wetsuits or other flotation devices that can be used by snorkellers.
- Learn how to communicate with supervisors and other snorkellers by using hand signals so that you will know when to return to the boat and how to communicate if you do need assistance.
- Learn how to lift and keep your face clear of the water.
- Learn how to use the buddy or pairs system where two snorkellers make sure they are always within a short distance of each other and keep a watch on each other's safety.
- Do not drink alcohol before snorkelling.

If you are intending to hold your breath and dive below the surface be aware of the risk.

- This can lead to unconsciousness, serious injury or death. The risk is increased greatly for divers who hyperventilate by taking repeated (more than three or four) deep breaths before diving below the surface or who undertake deep dives.

Please talk to your snorkel instructor or supervisor if you have any questions.



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PROVIDING ADVICE ABOUT MEDICAL CONDITIONS TO PROSPECTIVE RECREATIONAL SNORKELLERS

Reference the *Workplace Health and Safety Regulation 1997* Section 86I and the compressed Air Recreational Diving and Recreational Snorkelling Industry Code of Practice 2000 Section 3.2.2

Medical Declaration - recreational snorkellers

I (print name)..... declare that I have been advised snorkelling can be a strenuous physical activity and may increase the health and safety risks to me if I am suffering from:

A Any medical conditions that may be made worse by physical exertion

For example heart disease, asthma, some lung complaints

B Any medical condition that can result in loss of consciousness

For example some forms of epilepsy and some diabetic conditions

C Asthma that can be brought on by cold water or salt water mist

I have been advised that snorkelling can be a strenuous physical activity even in calm water and that persons over the age of 50 years are at an increased risk of death and injury due to a higher incidence of medical conditions made worse by physical exertion, such as heart disease and stroke.

I have been advised to tell the lookout, snorkelling supervisor or snorkelling guide if I have any concerns about a medical condition.

Signature _____

Date _____

Parent's or guardian's signature for minors _____

Note. It is recommended that anyone with a medical condition and anyone 50 years of age and over intending to snorkel should:

- a) snorkel in an area which allows the lookout or snorkelling supervisor to offer closer supervision
- b) wear a flotation device that will support the wearer in a relaxed state
- c) snorkel in buddy pairs.