



Why swim all year round?

Drowning

Having swimming lessons all year round is the best way to protect our children from the very real danger of the water that we have here in New Zealand. Year round swimmers retain a healthy respect for the water and build skills way beyond those of seasonal swimmers. Drowning is New Zealand's third highest cause of accidental death, and many people are unaware that only traffic incidents and falls cause more accidental deaths in New Zealand. Accurate annual drowning statistics only date to 1980 but peaked at 214 in 1985. Today the average, over the past five years, is 118. [Taken from the Water Safety New Zealand website.]

Drowning is not only a summer danger - rivers, open water, bathtubs and even covered swimming pools can be hazards. However, year round swimming is so much more than preventative medicine.

Amazing long term benefits

Scientific studies of infant swimming in Germany have shown that the early stimulation swimming provides develops the child in three key areas: physically, mentally, and emotionally. As compared with a control group which did not take year round lessons, the children who swam consistently from infancy were significantly stronger and more coordinated. The muscles developed by swimming enabled the children to excel at all physical activities. The children also scored higher for intelligence and problem solving, which carried over into excellence and alertness in school. And, emotionally, children who swim year round were found to be more self disciplined, motivated, confident, and gained high levels of self respect from consistent goal setting, learning and achievement.

Won't the kids be too tired for lessons after a day at school?

School involves sitting still and mental activity. Young bodies need a fun outlet to vent their energy. Being cooped up in school all winter can lead to lethargy. Swimming invigorates like no other exercise - it works all muscles in the body evenly on both sides and is aerobic and strength building. Children who are accustomed to healthy exercise grow into healthy adults.

What about sickness in cold weather?

Keeping fit aids a healthy immune system. Children who swim year round are less likely to become ill than those with a less active lifestyle. A cold is a *virus*, and can be easily caught when the immune system is weakened.

What about other sports?

In addition to all the unique benefits already mentioned, swimming is just about the only sport we can enjoy well into our senior years – it can be a life long pleasure. Swimming is also important for many related water sports and activities such as surfing, diving, fishing and boating. And once again remembering the safety of our children, swimming is the **only** sport which could save their lives some day.

So swim all year round and reap the benefits for a healthy life.

