

Virginia Beach Water Safety

What is a rip current?

Rip Currents are very powerful, channeled currents of water flowing away from shore. They tend to be the strongest during low tide. They are the most common beach and surf hazards leading to swimmer distress and potential rescue.

Different ways a rip current can look

- A specific area of water that appears more turbulent than the surrounding water
- A noticeable difference in water color, usually darker
- Gaps or flat sections in the waves breaking out in the water
- Foam, or floating objects, moving steadily out to sea

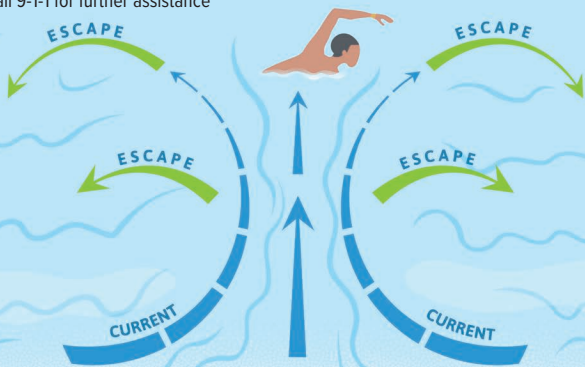
How to escape a rip current

The most important thing to remember if you are caught in a rip current is **DO NOT PANIC**. You should attempt to swim **PARALLEL TO THE SHORE** for about 30-50 yards or until out of the rip current, then swim at an angle toward the shore. Many people try to swim against a rip current. This is **DANGEROUS**. You will not be able to overcome the direct force of the rip current. If in danger, wave for help, relax and tread water to save energy!

Best ways to help someone else

Don't become a victim while trying to help someone else! Many people have died in efforts to rescue rip current victims.

- Get help from a lifeguard
- If a lifeguard is not present, yell instructions and use arm motions to swim parallel to the beach
- If possible, throw the rip current victim something that floats
- Call 9-1-1 for further assistance



RIP CURRENT