



COLD WATER TIPS

Cold water immersion is almost always the result of capsizing, swamping, or falling overboard from a boat under 26 feet. Here are six tips to help prevent disaster

1 Always wear a life jacket when in an open boat or on deck, **ESPECIALLY** if operating solo.

3 Make sure the boat has a reboarding device (such as a swim step, ladder, or foot sling) that can be used by a person overboard.

2 At least the operator, **ESPECIALLY** solo operators, should carry emergency communication devices (e.g., hand held VHF radio, cell phone in waterproof bag) and signaling devices (emergency locator beacon and visual distress signals) **ON THEIR PERSON**.

4 Solo operators should **ALWAYS** attach an engine cut-off device when underway.

5 Cold water boaters should consider carrying a small inflatable dinghy or life raft, and immersion (survival) suits.

6 File (and stick to) a float plan.



3 STAGES OF COLD WATER IMMERSION

Without a life jacket, each phase means a much higher risk of drowning.

1. COLD SHOCK RESPONSE
(gaspings, hyperventilation)

2. COLD INCAPACITATION
(swim failure, loss of function)

3. IMMERSION HYPOTHERMIA
(eventually resulting in loss of useful consciousness)

