What you need to know
to swim safely

Again this summer, many of you will have the pleasure of bathing along the Landes coastline. So as not to spoil that pleasure, you should be aware of a few basic rules.

The aim of this leaflet is to remind you of these.

Swimming can sometimes be a dangerous activity mostly because of "baines" or strong shore waves.

Make sure that bathing conditions do not become dangerous during the day. Please refer regularly to the weather reports.

112 - 18 - 15
Emergency numbers

112 is the European emergency call number, which can be dialed free of charge from any mobile or home number, anywhere throughout the European Union.

112 puts you directly in contact with the emergency department concerned (local police, firemen or emergency medical services) and allows you to speak to an operator in various European languages.

The 112 is available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week.

Have a nice bathing

Swimming safely along the Landes coastline

Strong shore waves...
What is a "baïne"?

A baïne is a formation of water created by the movement of the tides. In local language, it means “basin, bowl of water”. They’re extended all along the sand beaches of the Atlantic coast.

What to do if you are caught in a "baïne"?

Be well-prepared so as not to expose yourself to this danger

- "Baïnes" are at their most dangerous during the first three hours of the incoming tide and the last three hours of the outgoing tide;
- The safest way to avoid difficulty is to be aware of where the “baïnes” are during the tidal wave. You can then avoid them altogether;

To find this out, you can check the information boards at the entrance to the First Aid Posts.

If despite this, you are caught in a "baïne"...

- Try not to panic;
- Above all, don’t fight against the current. Let it carry you away even if that means drifting for a while;
- Draw attention to yourself whilst drifting, by waving your arms. Wait for help;
- Try and benefit from the current getting weaker by swimming out of the danger area (see diagram).

Strong Currents (as a general rule):

- Do not try to swim back to your starting point;
- Even if you are carried 300m further out you will be safe.

Please make sure you find out about the tidal currents

What to do when facing a shore wave?

Shore waves are one of the bather’s favourite pastimes. The smaller ones are fun but the bigger ones can cause injury when the wave is at its peak.

Advice to avoid accidents

On arrival at your destination, find out about the bathing areas and check if they are supervised, dangerous or even forbidden.

- Always cross the wave by diving through it;
- Stand sideways on when the wave breaks or is at its peak;
- Be careful of a series of waves which can draw you downwards;
- Finally, for maximum enjoyment, only swim in the supervised areas where there are trained swimming instructors.

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