



There are inherent risks associated with swimming in an open water environment.

**The Across the Lake Swim has taken the following measures to reduce these risks:**

1. The swim course is an open course and boat traffic cannot be prevented from entering the course. However, the swim course will be protected on the south (bridge) side by an RCMP patrol boat and large banners erected on the bridge. A flotilla of support kayakers, canoeists, and powerboats will protect the north side.
2. Powerboats designated as rescue boats, each containing lifeguards, will flank the course. These boats will be strategically positioned throughout the course. Each boat will be in radio communication with our Safety Director, who will be at the finish line, and our Head Lifeguard, who will be on the lake.
3. The course will be clearly marked with very large brightly colored buoys at the start and the finish, with an inflatable arch at the finish line to help with sighting.
4. Support kayakers and canoeists have all been provided instructions on how to summon help from the lifeguard boats. They provide an additional set of eyes and ears for the lifeguards.
5. All swimmers are encouraged to document their medical conditions and allergies on their race registration. The Safety Director has a master list of athletes and their medical conditions that was provided at the time of registration.
6. Swimmers are provided with brightly colored caps that are numbered. If there is an emergency, the lifeguard will identify the injured athlete by his/her cap and number, and be in radio contact with on shore medical support.
7. Lifeguards, the RCMP boat, and safety officials are in constant radio communication with each other. If there is an emergency on the water, medical support can be summoned immediately.
8. There is emergency medical equipment and personnel stationed at the swim finish line. BC Ambulance Service is aware of our swim, and is stationed just outside of the park perimeter.
9. The swim is held during the warmest part of the year-- average water temperature in mid-July is usually a comfortable 20-22°C.
10. Wearing of wetsuits is strongly encouraged as a strategy to reduce the risk of hypothermia. Wetsuits also provide floatation, which may enhance your swim, and provide security in case you cannot complete the swim.
11. The swim start is a rolling start
12. Swimmers are provided with pre-race information on the [acrossthelakeswim.com](http://acrossthelakeswim.com) website, as well as at package pickup that includes a review of the course and safety procedures such as how to summon a lifeguard.
13. We electronically track all swimmers who enter and exit the water to ensure no one is unaccounted for.
14. The boating and yacht clubs on the lake have been made aware of the swim, to minimize boaters entering the swimming zone on the morning of the swim.

**Here is what you can do to minimize risk:**

1. Stay healthy and fit.
2. Consult your physician and follow his/her advice concerning your participation in strenuous physical activity such as swimming in open water, especially if you have known medical conditions.
3. Ensure that you have notified race officials of any medical conditions and allergies that you have. This should be documented on your registration. We also encourage you to speak to any of our Across the Lake Swim team, the medical volunteers or the lifeguards if you have any health-related concerns.
4. Know your limitations. You should be able to swim 1000-2000 meters comfortably with or without the aid of a wetsuit.
5. If you experience chest pain, severe shortness of breath, heart palpitations, feel faint or otherwise feel unwell during competition, attempt to pull off the course if you can (to avoid being run over) and summon help from a lifeguard.
6. Train in open water in an effort to become comfortable swimming:
  - With and without the aid of a wetsuit;
  - In cold water conditions;
  - With groups of people in an effort to get used to swimming in a crowd;
  - In deep water and in rough conditions.
7. Read thoroughly the information provided to you on the [acrossthelakeswim.com](http://acrossthelakeswim.com) website and ask questions at package pickup.
8. Know the course and the appropriate landmarks for sighting.
9. Be prepared to swim with crowds of people.
  - We recommend that faster competitive swimmers enter the competitive group, or start themselves earlier in the rolling start.
  - We recommend that those swimmers with more modest goals and/or those athletes who want to avoid the perils and pitfalls of group starts (e.g. pulling/kicking) take their time entering the water. You may be rewarded with a powerful draft!
  - We recommend that swimmers with any anxiety undertaking this swim have a dedicated kayaker or SUP accompany them across the lake. If you feel you are anxious about the swim, we have a “white cap” system where we will give you a white swim cap which will allow us to keep a closer eye on you! Please ask for a white cap at the information tent in the morning of the swim if you feel you need one.
10. Ensure you warm up prior to your swim start. We recommend getting into the water near the swim start at least 10-15 minutes prior to the swim start to get used to the water temperature, to warm up your wet suit, and do some easy swimming. This will minimize the sudden cardiac load, loosen up your shoulders, make sure your goggles are fitting well, and allow you to acclimatize to the lots of other swimmers doing the same thing.