



WELCOME TO BABY AND FAMILY SWIMMING!



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1. WHAT IS BABY SWIMMING?

Baby swimming is a shared moment of exercises and play between babies and parents, monitored by a trained instructor in warm water. The ideal age to begin baby swimming is approx. 3-5 months. At this age, the child stays awake and has the stamina to move around during the whole baby swimming session. The child must weigh a minimum of 5 kg to be able to maintain a comfortable body temperature in the 32 (celsius) degree water.

Baby swimming is a joint family hobby where the baby is the main focus. Every activity should be happening on the terms of the baby, which is important when trying to be a friend of the water.

During baby swimming the child will not learn to swim independently but will learn how to play and dive in the water with the assistance of the parents. The requirement for a safe baby swimming session is the constant guidance of the parents and the presence of a trained baby swim instructor. In Finland the Finnish Swim Teaching and Lifesaving Association and Samfundet Folkhälsan are responsible for the training of baby swimming instructors.

The experts in the background associations have an important role in the surveillance of baby swimming. During baby swimming the responsibility of the child is always with the parents who will become the main instructors of the child as he/she grows.

GOALS FOR BABY SWIMMING

- family playtime
- bringing families together for social interaction
- leading towards a healthy and regular sports activity
- the child will learn to enjoy and relax in the water
- eases learning how to swim later on in life
- adds water safety



2. PREPARATIONS BEFORE THE FIRST SESSION

- Discuss about baby swimming at the child health center
- If you are afraid of the water, try to overcome your fear, because it will reflect on the child
- Accustom the child to the time of the baby swimming
- Accustoming the child to noises

INSTRUCTIONS FOR BATHING AT HOME

- Both parents should participate in bathing the child at home
- Do not bathe a tired or a hungry child
- Fill the bathtub with lots of water
- The bathwater's temperature should gradually be lowered from 37 to 32 °C
- Talk to the child in varying tones of voice and bathe the child in a playful manner
- Bathe the child on his/her back, stomach and sides
- Switch the position of the child frequently, hold the whole body in the water in all positions (keep the ears under water when holding the baby on his/her back)

PREPARING FOR THE SWIMMING SESSION

- Reserve enough time when you are coming to session.
- Make sure the child's basic needs are satisfied (sleep, food), this will enhance the child's comfort in the water. Never feed the child immediately before swimming. At least 1,5hours should have passed after the latest feeding to prevent puking and pooing.
- The child can be carried in a baby's carryon.
- Bring along a big towel to the poolside to keep the child warm and comfortable.
- Wash yourself without a swimsuit from head to toe before coming to the pool. Remove your make-up and jewelry: rings, piercings, bracelets, necklaces etc. Jewelry gathers dirt. Long hair should be tied back after the shower and/or use a swim cap.
- The child must wear a swimsuit with tight trouser legs and waist, swimming diaper is not mandatory.
- Move calmly in the shower rooms and the pool area to avoid slipping and falling.
- You are not allowed to enter the baby swimming pool before the instructor is in place and has advised the families of that group to enter the pool.
- After your session you must leave the pool area.
- Do not go to the sauna before swimming!



3. THE FIRST SWIMMING SESSIONS

During the first swimming sessions the child is accustomed to the pool facilities, the water and the parents are taught how to hold the child in the water. When entering the water, the child should be held in a gentle grip. Eye and skin contact should be kept between the parent and the child. Keep talking to the child in a soothing voice whilst kneeling down in the water and dip yourself in the water up to your shoulder level. By massaging the child, you can help the child to relax, feel warmer and safer in the pool. After the first dip in the water it is favorable to stay in the pool and move around as much as possible.

When keeping the child in an upright position it is important not to squeeze the child too hard. To avoid the child from getting cold try to keep most of the child's body under the water. When lying on the back the child's ears should be under water whilst the parent holds one hand under the back of the head and the other under the buttocks of the child. Constant eye-contact and gentle movements will help the child to get used to lying on his/her back in the water.

While lying on his/her stomach the child will probably make his/her first swimming like movements. With some assistance the child gets used to moving forward and will move his/her feet and legs more actively. If the youngest babies lack power to carry their head the parent may assist the child by placing the palm under the child's chin. The first wetting of the face is also carried out in the lying position, wiping with a wet hand from top to bottom, then gradually increasing the water, however, so that the stream of water always flows from the forehead downwards.

During the first swimming sessions the parents are taught how to hold their child in the water. The grip should be light with a minimal amount of support to enhance the independent movements of the child and keep the main part of the child's body under water. Upright-, facing up- and facing down -positions are altered frequently whilst playing and moving around the pool. When the child has gotten used to the different positions the parent can handle the child more briskly and with a faster pace in the games. Swimming is hard work for the child and every once in a while the child needs a break. Every swimming session should be enjoyable for the child.





4. CHALLENGES IN BABY SWIMMING

If the child is having a "bad day" and nothing seems to work it is better to cut the swimming session short and try again next time. If the child gets mad, don't let him/her cry loudly for a long period of time as the other babies can easily join in with the crying.

During the "transition time" in baby swimming (6-9 months) the child should be brought to baby swimming even on a "bad day". During this phase the most common problem is being shy of strangers and staying at home won't help the child socialize. During this phase even observing others and being in the water is beneficial.

FAECES

It is impossible to monitor and avoid babies peeing in the pool but there is not a risk for infection because baby urine is clean. Poop on the other hand contains bacteria. Should this kind of an accident occur in the pool, the pool would be closed and there would be no more baby swimming that day. These incidents are rare though.

EAR INFECTION

Ear infection is a common and very painful childhood disease. Water in itself doesn't cause ear infections. The child needs to be exposed to a virus or bacteria to get infected. To prevent ear infections avoid coming to the pool if the child has a cold. If an ear infection has been diagnosed the child shouldn't come to the pool before a post check-up with a doctor to assure that the ear is healthy.

SWALLOWING WATER

Whilst diving, floating and during other circumstances while the child's head is under water the child may swallow some water. A small amount of water is harmless but large quantities strain the child's blood circulation and cause disruptions in the hydration levels. This requires however a 6% increase in the child's bodyweight and a child can swallow these amounts of water only if he/she is allowed to dive too many times or turned on their back right after diving.

INFECTIONS AND WOUNDS

Fever, open and/or abscessed wounds, all sorts of infections, such as: eye- or cuticle infections, infected rashes and other exuding skin infections are obstacles to participating in baby swimming. Not until the infection is completely cleared it is suitable to continue baby swimming. This applies for the child as well as the parents!



5. ALWAYS REMEMBER...

Here are a few tips that you should always keep in mind before attending each lesson. By keeping these things in mind, we all will have a pleasant swimming experience!

LET'S KEEP THE WATER CLEAN

Adult swimmers' personal hygiene has a major impact on the water purity in the swimming pool. Small babies (under 7 months) are however mainly clean and before swimming only the baby's diaper area needs to be washed.

Bacteria is being spread to the pool area especially by adults. Therefore, please follow carefully the instructions below:

- Wash your whole body from top to toe in the shower before swimming.
- Shower always without your swimsuit on.
- Intimate areas should be washed extra carefully.
- Carefully wash your hair, head and scalp so that the possible grease, dandruff and torn hair will not end up in the pool.
- Carefully wash away all the make-up, body lotion and chemicals (perfume, deodorant, hair spray etc.) from your body.
- Long hair should be tied before entering the pool or wear a swimming cap.
- Watches, necklaces and jewelry should not be worn in the pool. This way, an adult's dead skin cells do not dissolve in the pool.
- Swim only in a proper swimsuit. Sports shorts are not allowed for swimming. Even though the city of Espoo allows swimming shorts in the swimming halls, we still recommend for hygiene reasons that everyone would wear a swimsuit made out of swimsuit material.
- Do not go to the sauna before swimming. The sweating will continue in the water. Please notice that if you take your baby with you to the sauna you should not throw water on the stove.
- Do not swim under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

DO NOT PARTICIPATE WHEN YOU ARE ILL

Each swimmer has an influence on how the infections and bacteria spread in the swimming pool. Do not participate in baby swimming if you are ill. This applies for both adults and children.

The pool water has individual impact on different babies' skins. Normally a baby's bathing does not need to be restricted in any way. If the baby's skin however feels very dry using body lotion immediately after drying baby's skin with the towel is recommendable. If the baby or the adult has skin diseases or open wounds these should be treated before joining the group.



6. TERMS OF PAYMENT AND ABSENCES

When registering for baby or family swimming course you will commit to the entire swimming season. Baby swim is 19,50 €/session, the price includes two adults and one child. If attending with twins the cost is 23,50€/session. When participating for the family swim with one child the price is 19,50€/session and with two children 23,50€/session. The price includes two adults and all the children under 7 years old in the family.

Price includes teaching, the family's entrance fee and an insurance. The first four lessons are paid when registering (78€ or 94€). Remember to inform how many children are participating in the swimming. Baby and family swimming will be billed monthly during the season. It is possible to compensate single absences with separate replacement swims.

COMPENSATING ABSENCES

- If you are not able to attend your own swim session you can compensate the session. The compensation times you can find on our home page. You can compensate a maximum of two sessions per month. The compensation swim must be used latest within the next month. The compensation swim must be used before the course membership expires and on the same swim season. We recommend that the absence compensation swim would be held as soon as possible. Please note that absences won't affect the invoices.
- As an exception for longer (at least one calendar month) absences, it is possible to get a refund in billing **ONLY** if there is a certificate from a health nurse or doctor about the absence. After this, billing continues normally.
- Please note that the certificate must show the period of time when you were prevented from swimming due to illness. Certificates can be sent electronically to vauvainti@cetus.fi
NOTE! We will refund the amount in your upcoming invoice unless otherwise agreed with the office. You may not edit the amount to be paid on your invoice yourself.

CHANGING THE BEGINNING DATE

When you accept a place in the swimming group it can be kept reserved to you free of charge for up to one month. After this, billing continues normally. If you want to change the beginning date you must inform Cetus' office by e-mail vauvainti@cetus.fi right after registration. Absences reported afterwards will not be taken into account in the invoicing.



CANCELLATION OF THE SWIMMING PLACE

When you wish to terminate the swimming you have to inform the office by e-mail vauvauinti@cetus.fi no later than FOUR WEEKS before the actual termination. The notice period starts earliest from the notification date.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The cancellation of a swim session for a reason not attributable to the course organizer (Cetus) does not entitle the customer to refund the participation fee or to organize substitute tutoring swim session. An unforeseen event can be, for example, a vomit or poop accident in the pool, which prevents customers and course participants from using the pool at that time. You can find all our terms and conditions [from here](#).

7. SWIMMING HALL INSTRUCTIONS



- Arrive to the swimming hall about 15-20 min before the swimming group begins. If you come with a car, remember the parking disc.
- The swimming time lasts about 30 minutes.
- The parents are responsible of the children in the changing- and showerrooms and in the pool.
- One has to leave the pool area when the session ends.

KESKI-ESPOO SWIMMING HALL

- You will get a swimming bracelet from the cashier.
- The men use the general changing room.
- The women can use the group changing rooms 1 and 2 or the general changing room.
- Please, open the group changing room's door carefully, someone can stand behind the door.
- The Therapy-pool is found on your right side when coming out from the general changing room. The pool is located behind the courtin and by using the the door on the left side of the courtin you will find the pool. From the group changing room you will enter straight to the therapy pool.

LEPPÄVAARA SWIMMING HALL

- You will get a swimming bracelet from the cashier.
- The common changing rooms are for your family's use.
- Use the entrance across the cashier, it will lead you to the swimming hall's innerpool's changing rooms. The changing rooms are located on the second floor. The entrance on the right side of the cashier takes you to the outdoor swimming pool.
- The therapy-pool is located between the life savers' booth and the jumping pool.

MATINKYLÄ SWIMMING HALL

- You will get a swimming bracelet from the cashier.
- The men use the common changing room.
- The women can use the common changing room or the group changing rooms that are marked with separate reserved signs.
- The Therapy-pool is found straight in front of the men's changing room and the group changing room. From the women's changing room the therapy pool is located to the left.



8. FAQ

IF ONE OF THE PARENTS IS NOT ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SWIMMING CLASS, CAN ANOTHER ADULT COME TO THE INDIVIDUAL CLASS?

Yes, you can come. There is no need to inform the office about this separately. Visiting children are not allowed in the pool, no more than two adults per family.

WHAT SORT OF SWIMSUIT SHOULD THE CHILD HAVE? SHOULD THE CHILD USE A SWIM DIAPER?

We recommend a swimsuit instead of swimpants because in a swimsuit the child is easier to hold (the skin maybe slippery when wet). Most supermarkets and stores that sell sports goods also sell swimsuits and swimpants for children. Swimsuits should be tight around the legs and waist, if you do not have a swim diaper on the child, so that nothing would get out of the suit in case of an poopoo accident.

It is not obligatory to use a swim diaper. A dry diaper may float and wet one drag the child down. There are also studies that show that swim diapers don't hold so well that it would make a difference.

IS IT POSSIBLE TO JOIN BABY SWIMMING IF THE CHILD OR THE PARENT HAS SPECIAL NEEDS?

If the child has special needs or is prematurely born you will need a written permission to join baby swimming by the doctor taking care of the child. It is also recommended to inform the instructors if the parents have an illness or something else that might be relevant during the session, for example diminished hearing.

SHOULD THE PARENT OR THE CHILD KNOW ANY METHODS BEFORE PARTICIPATING IN BABY OR FAMILY SWIMMING?

No. Our instructors are there to teach both the child and the adult to function in the water so that the child will become a friend of the water and the swimming will become a fun playtime for the whole family.

NOTES: