

OPEN WATER SWIMMING QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION 1: SWIMMER DETAILS

Name

Date of Birth

Address

E-Mail

Telephone Number

Emergency Contact Name

Emergency Contact Number

SECTION 2: OPEN WATER SWIMMING EXPERIENCE

Have you any previous experience of open water swimming?

When did you most recently swim in open water?

How long were you in the water?

What was the water temperature?

Do you normally wear a wetsuit?

If so, what sort (e.g. full body or shorty) of wetsuit is it?

Do you normally wear neoprene gloves and/or booties?

Have you previously experienced any problems when swimming in open water?

Have you previously experienced any problems after you have got out of the water e.g. fainting, hypothermia, dizziness or palpitations?

SECTION 3: SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS

This includes but is not limited to:

- Only entering the water when given the all clear to do so by the session leader
- Wearing a brightly coloured swim hat at all times when in the water
- Wearing a wetsuit
- Following the prescribed swim course
- Complying with any instruction to exit the water
- Being aware of other swimmers and summoning assistance if I notice a swimmer in difficulty
- Bringing appropriate clothing (including hat, gloves and warm socks) to change into post swim
- Bringing/purchasing a warm drink post swim
- Not attempting to drive until warmed up post swim OR being driven by a supporter (who has not been swimming) if having to leave before warming up

- Not swimming when I am unwell (for example: a cold, chest infection, feel that I am coming down with a cold, open wounds, ear infection) or under the influence of alcohol or drugs (including medications which might make me drowsy or impair my performance)

SECTION 4: MEDICAL HISTORY

Do you have or have you ever experienced any cardio-vascular conditions e.g. high blood pressure, dizziness or palpitations?

Is there a history of cardio-vascular conditions in your family (immediate family e.g. parents, siblings, grandparents, less than 50 years of age)?

Do you have any respiratory conditions e.g. asthma?

Do you have a neurological condition e.g. epilepsy?

Are you pregnant?

Have you any previous experience of winter swimming (water temperature below 11oC)?

Do you have any allergies, mobility issues or impaired sight or hearing that may require additional support? Please provide details.

In the event of an emergency is there any information that the medical services should be made aware of? Please provide details.

NOTE: If you answer YES to any of the questions above you must check with your GP (or a medical doctor) that you are fit to swim in open water before participating.

I believe that I am fit and healthy to participate in open water swimming and I am not aware of any reason as to why I should not do so.

I accept that taking part in open water swimming is by its nature hazardous and contains certain inherent risks. I fully understand the risks involved with undertaking the activity.

I accept that I owe a significant duty of care to Alnwick & District Triathlon Club and other swimmers to act responsibly and follow all safety instructions.

I confirm I have been given the link to University of Portsmouth's Cold Shock Safety Advice Video.

I hereby declare that to the best of my knowledge, I am in good general health, and I have disclosed all medical information relevant to my participation.

I acknowledge that Alnwick & District Triathlon Club has relied on this statement (in its entirety) in accepting my participation in their winter swimming sessions at Ladyburn Lake, Druridge Bay Country Park and that if I was unable or unwilling to agree to all the matters set out above in this statement of responsibility Alnwick & District Triathlon Club would not allow me to participate.

All statements of fact are true.

Signed

Date

COLD WATER SWIMMING FACT SHEET

Swimming in cold water should always be approached with care.

Swimming in cold water puts additional pressure on the cardio-vascular system.

- If you have any known medical conditions or a family history of cardio-vascular conditions OR if you have previously experienced difficulties after swimming in cold water, refer to your GP before participating.

When you are cold your thinking and mobility are impaired.

- Always check that you know where and how to exit before entering the water

When you first get into cold water you will experience the cold shock response – initial gasp, rapid breathing, increase heart rate and blood pressure. During this time it is difficult to coordinate swimming and breathing.

- Always acclimatise to the water temperature before attempting to swim.
- Keep your head above water as you acclimatise.

NOTE: Wetsuits do not remove the cold shock response as they fill with water when you get in. The benefit kicks in when the layer of water trapped between the skin and the wetsuit warms up. Going in to very cold water (typically less than 10oC) can cause numbness and pain, particularly in the extremities such as the hands and feet. Neoprene socks and gloves can help protect your hands and feet.

As you get colder you can experience mental confusion, slurred speech and poor movement coordination.

- Never set time goals for staying in the water. Get out if you are not comfortable.
- Always follow the instructions of the safety team and get out if they ask you to – they have your best interests at heart.

When you get out of the water you continue to cool for approximately 20 to 30 minutes. Re warming takes time.

- Be prepared for re-warming: bring dry warm clothes including hat, gloves and thick socks, bring a warm drink if one isn't provided.
- Re-warm gradually – don't worry if you shiver, shivering is good.
- Do not jump into a hot shower or bath.
- Do not attempt to drive or ride a bike until you have re-warmed. If you need to leave before you have re warmed bring a non-swimming supporter who can give you a lift