

Adult Cold Water Swimming Information

Contact number

Elizabeth Mills: 07795026207

Location

Address: Castle Lake (at the Dorset Adventure Park), Mill Lakes, Studland Road, Corfe Castle, Arfleet, Dorset. BH20 5JG

Parking

There is plenty of free parking on site.

When you arrive... WELCOME!

Come and say hello and sign in with us (Elizabeth/Hayley) before you enter the water/sauna.

What to bring...

- Please bring plenty of **warm clothes** to put on after your swim, including lots of layers, dry robe/warm coat, a woolly hat, gloves, warm socks and warm footwear.
- Please bring a tow float with lights/a light in, to wear in the water during your swim. This is for extra safety, visibility and useful to rest on if you need to.
- Please bring a **reusable mug** for the free hot chocolate, (or your own hot drink in a thermos, if you'd prefer).

What to wear in the pool...

- A costume/trunks
- Tow float (for your safety)
- A swim hat - to keep you warmer in the water when you are swimming, or a woolly hat for dipping/head up swimming (and a spare dry one for afterwards).
- Ear plugs are a really good idea to help protect your ears from the cold and ear infections.
- Goggles – non tinted ones are recommended (due to swimming in the lake in the dark).
- An adventure light (waterproof light) is recommended - put this on the strap of your goggles and/or swimming costume, so you are more visible.

Extras...

- You are welcome to wear wetsuit gloves and/or wetsuit socks/boots. Please ensure these are clean - no salt water or sand in the lake please!
- Neoprene swimming costumes/rash vests/shorts/hats are permitted.
- If you wish to wear a wetsuit (if you are training for a wetsuit event, for example), please only put it on and off outside the changing rooms. (This is to avoid slips). Please ensure wetsuits are clean and free from salt and sand.
- You are welcome to take your **towel/dryrobe** to the lake side and leave near the pontoon. There is a short walk outside, from the changing rooms to the lake and sauna, so you may wish to bring flip flops/crocs to wear.
- Please remove jewellery before entering the lake.
- Please bring any **medication** (e.g. inhalers) onto the lake side and inform the lifeguard and swim coach.

Changing Facilities/Accessibility

There are toilet facilities, which are a short walk from the lake. There are male and female changing rooms. Please feel free to come 'beach ready', to save time in the changing rooms. There is a pontoon to enter/exit the lake. It is best to enter sliding in slowly on your bottom. No jumping/diving in (entering cold water too quickly can cause cold water shock).

The Lake

Castle Lake in Dorset, is a newly opened, spring-fed freshwater open-water swimming Lake. The water quality of the lake is tested regularly on a monthly basis. The secluded freshwater lake is set within ancient woodland, offering views of Corfe Castle. There is a 160-metre swimming loop in the lake and pontoon dips. The lake is staffed by open-water qualified and first-aid trained lifeguards (provided by The Wild Swimming Co.) and there are two qualified Open Water Swimming Coaches with Cold Water Therapy Certification.

The Sauna

The Castle Spring Sauna at Castle Lake is a lakeside wood-fired sauna offering views of the historic castle ruins and surrounding ancient woodland. It is set in a tranquil, spring-fed freshwater setting, operated in partnership with The Wild Swimming Co. featuring contrast therapy with a wood-fired sauna (60–80°C Narvi Kuru stove), a spring-water plunge pool, and a cold-water rainfall shower.

Cancellation

We regret that no refunds, roll overs or swaps with another person, can be given for missed sessions. If I have to cancel the session myself, you will be given an alternative/roll over lesson, or full refund (if I am unable to provide an alternative lesson).

Please only come swimming if you are feeling well.

If there are any changes in your contact information, including medical information, please let me know before you start your session.

We hope you enjoy your swim! Please read this important information below...

The Risks of Cold Water Swimming

There are risks associated with cold water immersion. As a general rule, get expert medical advice before cold water swimming if you have a heart condition, high blood pressure, asthma, or are pregnant. Swim sober and avoid cold water if you have a hangover.

Cold Shock: This is the body's reaction to sudden cold. It begins with the gasp reflex and continues with uncontrolled hyperventilation. This is a good reason not to jump into cold water, as a sudden involuntary gasp for air can cause you to inhale water, if your head is submerged. The initial shock and rapid breathing can cause a feeling of panic and disorientation.

Instead, enter the water calmly and slowly. Breathe – Focus on slow, deep breathing as you enter the water to manage the shock. An unaccustomed person will experience a cold shock response even in water between 10 – 15 degrees Celcius.

Cold shock causes an increased heart rate and blood pressure, which can be dangerous for people with heart conditions.

Hypothermia: When your body temperature drops below 35 degrees Celsius you will begin to experience signs of hypothermia.

- **Uncontrollable shivering:** This is your body's natural attempt to warm itself up through involuntary muscle movements. As hypothermia worsens, this shivering may decrease or stop altogether, which is a very dangerous sign.
- **Slurred speech and mumbling:** Your speech may become slow and hard to understand.
- **Clumsiness and loss of coordination:** You may stumble and have trouble with simple movements.

- **Confusion, poor judgement or memory loss:** The cold can impair your ability to think clearly. You may experience confusion, memory loss, and a general lack of awareness.
- **Drowsiness and fatigue:** A strong sense of sleepiness or exhaustion is a dangerous sign.
- **Blue or pale skin:** Your skin, lips and extremities may turn blue or gray as your body restricts blood flow to protect your core.
- **Erratic or irrational behaviour:** Some people may become irritable or behave irrationally, including trying to remove their clothes in a confused state.
- **Nausea:** The body's systems, including digestion begin to slow down as a protective response to cold.
- **Faintness and Dizziness:** As the body temperature drops further, circulation decreases.

Cramp: Cramp can strike anywhere, and some people are more prone than others. If you're cold, cramp is perhaps more likely. If you do cramp, float on your back, or swim to the side of the pool, and call for help. To help avoid cramp, drink plenty of water before and during your swim, maintain good electrolyte levels and warm up (exercises) properly before your swim.

Asthma: In some asthmatics, cold can trigger an attack. If you have asthma, please obtain medical advice before cold water swimming. If you have an inhaler, please bring it to the poolside.

After Drop: This is when your core temperature keeps dropping even after you've warmed up. After drop is common after swimming in cold water; you get out and feel fine, then as you start to warm up your peripheral blood vessels begin to open, and the warmed blood from your core is cooled rapidly. This will kick off some serious shivering, and you might find you can't keep your hot chocolate in the mug. This is another reason for warming gradually. If you feel unwell at this stage, sit down somewhere warm. Please note, your body temperature can continue to fall for up to 40 minutes after you get out of the water.

You have approximately 10 minutes after exiting the water before the after drop occurs, during these 10 minutes, you may feel absolutely fine and will not be shivering and therefore wonder what all the fuss is about. Don't hang around – use these 10 minutes to get dressed into your dry warm clothes as quickly as you can. It's a lot harder to dress yourself once those shivers kick in.

Top tips: How to manage after drop:

Get your wet stuff off immediately you get out of the water. Get dry quickly and layer up in warm clothes. Have your clothes ready in the order you put them on. Wear clothes that are easy to put on – the baggier the better! No buttons! Elasticated baggy clothes are best. Put a hot water bottle with your clothes while you are swimming. Wear a warm hat, warm socks and gloves after to help you warm up. Have a hot drink ready for when you are dressed. Put a hot water bottle around your back to warm your kidneys. Use hand warmers – rechargeable ones are best. Eat something to help you rewarm. Gentle movement helps circulation. Remember to warm up gradually – skip the hot shower (this can cause a dangerously rapid drop in blood pressure, causing dizziness and fainting, and/or a false sense of warming and your body stops it's natural warming, leading to a nasty after drop). Be patient – full recovery can take a few hours.

How long should I stay in the cold water for?

Don't stay in too long if you haven't been in for a while. It's always better to get out feeling like you could have done more. The hard part is the warming up after your swim and if you've depleted yourself in the water, what energy have you got left to warm yourself up? Build up the time you stay in the cold water slowly, helping you to acclimatise to cold water safely. Take note of the water and air temperature on each dip/swim, how long you stayed in for, how you felt during and after each swim, and any other contributing factors that could have affected your swim (e.g. lack of sleep/food etc). Top tip: Get out when you are still feeling good.

Swim your swim – just because your friend is staying in for longer, doesn't mean you will be able to. Instead, swim your own swim and get out when you need to.

Take each swim completely fresh - Everyone's bodies react differently on different days, depending on a of multiple factors – if you've eaten properly, if you're tired, under the weather, bad health/injuries, stressed, if you start off cold, if you haven't hydrated properly, and what your hormones are doing. One day can be very different to another day. Be kind to yourself and listen to your body. One day you can have a lovely cold swim for 10 minutes (for example) and be fine, but another day you could develop a nasty after drop post swim. For this reason, please don't use the 1 minute per degree rule – this is now not advised.

Stress: Getting into cold water can be a great way to manage stress, anxiety and depression, but it is also in itself a stressor. When you're already stressed your body's ability to cope with that cold stress when you dip/swim may not be as good as on a day when you are relaxed and chilled. Impacts of high stress levels include a stronger cold shock response, more difficulty in regulating breathing, lower cold water tolerance and a weakened ability to rewarm after a cold swim.

Stress isn't a reason not to swim or dip, but it is a reason to take care, be kind to yourself and really listen to your body.

What are some of the signs that you have stayed in too long and should have got out of the water earlier?

- **Weakness in arms and legs and a change in your swimming style** – limbs may feel heavy and sluggish, and your arms and legs may struggle to move or propel you. You may find it hard to coordinate your swimming strokes. You may start to swim more vertically, and your stroke may become less efficient.
- **Fatigue** - You will feel a significant drop in energy, and your stroke rate may slow down.
- **Loss of control in hands** – your hands may become stiff and claw-like, and you may be unable to grip or move your fingers properly.
- **Muscles cramps** – the cold can cause muscles to cramp, especially in your hands and feet.
- Any of the signs of **hypothermia** in the bullet points above.

Remember: Cold water dipping/swimming is all a learning experience. Be safe, look out for others, and of course, enjoy yourself!

Cold Water Swimming Waiver Form

A reminder of the waiver you ticked upon booking...

RISKS and LIABILITY WAIVER

- I understand that cold water swimming is a high-risk activity and that I participate entirely at my own risk.
- I acknowledge and accept all risks of injury, death, or property loss associated with cold water swimming.
- I agree that the organisers, coaches, and associated staff are not liable for any injury, accident, or harm that may occur during the session.
- I hereby waive my right to take legal action against the organisers for any loss, injury, or damage that may arise from my participation.
- I understand that I am responsible for my own safety and for ensuring I follow all rules and instructions from staff and lifeguards.
- I am medically fit to participate in cold water swimming.
- All contact and medical details that I have provided (on the booking system) are correct and truthful to my knowledge.
- I have read the 'Risks of Cold Water Swimming' and 'What to Bring and Wear' documents (emailed to you).