

Health Highlights: River, lake safety ahead of Labor Day
Tim Ditman| Media Relations Coordinator
Audio Version

<<(I'M TIM DITMAN WITH TODAY'S HEALTH HIGHLIGHTS FROM OSF HEALTHCARE.

INSTEAD OF BEING A BEACH BUM OR A MOUNTAIN CLIMBER... MAYBE RIVERS AND LAKES ARE MORE YOUR SPEED.

BUT DON'T LET LAKE LIFE WASH AWAY YOUR SAFETY HABITS AND GOOD JUDGMENT.

IN 2023 – THE U.S. COAST GUARD COUNTED OVER 38-HUNDRED RECREATIONAL BOATING ACCIDENTS... RESULTING IN 5-HUNDRED SIXTY-FOUR DEATHS. THE C-D-C REPORTS DROWNING DEATHS ARE ON THE RISE FOR THE FIRST TIME IN DECADES... WITH OVER 45-HUNDRED PEOPLE DROWNING EACH YEAR FROM 2020 TO 2022.

DR. JON GEHLBACH IS THE MEDICAL DIRECTOR FOR THE PEDIATRIC CRITICAL CARE UNIT AT THE OSF CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF ILLINOIS. HE SAYS THERE ARE MANY UNKNOWN FACTORS IN NATURAL BODIES OF WATER LIKE LAKES AND RIVERS THAT MAKE THEM MORE DANGEROUS THAN POOLS.

"They tend to be darker, so it's harder to see what's going on below the surface. They could have hidden obstacles. Currents play a factor as well. Kids might be great swimmers in the pool, but currents make it a lot more challenging to swim safely."

ANOTHER HARMFUL THING TO KEEP IN MIND IS THE SPREAD OF WATERBORNE PATHOGENS AND BACTERIA... LIKE E. COLI. THE ILLINOIS ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY SAYS TO NOT TRANSPORT WATER... ANIMALS... FISH OR PLANTS FROM ONE BODY OF WATER TO ANOTHER... AND TO WASH YOURSELF... YOUR BOATS AND EQUIPMENT WITH HOT WATER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE... ONCE YOU'RE OUT OF THE WATER.

WITH TODAY'S HEALTH HIGHLIGHTS... I'M TIM DITMAN.)>>