



## Break the grip of the Rip®

### How to spot a rip current:

- A break in the incoming pattern of waves
- Water in a surf zone that is a different color (often darker) to the surrounding water
- Seaweed, bubbles or debris moving out to sea through the surf zone
- Isolated turbulent and choppy water in the surf zone

**If avoidance fails:** If you are caught in a rip current stay calm. Swim slowly parallel to the shoreline or relax and let the current carry you out past the breakers until it slacks, and then swim parallel to the shore before using the waves to carry you back to the beach.

### Float on your back and wave one arm for help.

Rip currents are not an "undertow." They will not pull you under the water. So long as you can tread water or float you will be safe until you can escape the flow and head back to the beach. Maintain a slow and relaxed swimming pace until you reach the shore or assistance arrives.

### Other tips:

- Talk to the lifesavers about rip currents before getting in the water.
- **NEVER** swim alone.
- There is nothing wrong with making young children wear approved life jackets to play in the surf. That doesn't mean you can leave them alone – but it will make them safer.
- Discuss rip currents and how to deal with them with your children.
- Swim only on beaches where lifesavers are on duty.
- Make sure that your local Sea Rescue telephone number is in your phone. Go to [www.searescue.org.za](http://www.searescue.org.za) and click on **EMERGENCY NUMBERS** to see what your local number is.

## DO NOT PANIC

Rip currents can develop anywhere where there are breaking waves. These rivers of current are made by water draining from the beach and flowing back out to sea. Ranging in width from just a few metres to a hundred metres or so, they can flow faster than we can swim. They can pull a swimmer in deeper than the breaking waves and sometimes further than that.

In an emergency call 10177

  
**Sea Rescue**  
 NATIONAL SEA RESCUE INSTITUTE

For more information visit  
[www.searescue.org.za](http://www.searescue.org.za)