

Choosing goggles and caps.....

A lot of people think goggles and caps have something to do with style. What is ignored is the real reason these things are worn. Today , different types of swimming goggles and caps are available in the market. We provide below, some information on GOGGLES and SWIMCAPS.

** HOW TO SELECT SWIM CAPS **

A swim cap is an important part of many swimmers workout attire. Swim caps are worn for many purposes: to protect your hair from chlorine, keep your hair from tangling, to help streamline you as you swim, to insulate the top of your head when in cold water, during an open water swim to make you visible, or can be worn simply as a fashion item to make a statement with a printed logo or have your cap match your swim suit.

There are several major types of swim caps: latex caps, silicone caps, lycra caps, fitness caps and insulated caps.

LATEX RACING CAPS are the most popular type of swim cap. They are named for the latex rubber material used in their construction. Latex caps are very popular because they provide good protection from the water and are extremely inexpensive. They are available in a wide variety of colors, and can be printed with neat designs or team names. They are very streamlined and make you more slippery in the water. And because they fit very tight to the head, when you pull them down and wear them over your ears they provide relatively good protection from the water, keeping water off of most of your hair and out of your ears.

SILICONE CAPS are a heavier weight material than latex, so these caps are much more durable than the standard latex racing cap (some swimmers get years of use from their silicone caps when rinsed properly after each swim) . Silicone caps have a slippery touch, so they do not pull your hair as much as other caps when you take the cap off of your head.

LYCRA® CAPS are made of the same lycra® brand spandex as swim suits are. Consequently they will keep no water out of your hair. Lycra® caps are worn by people who want to keep the hair in place (and out of eyes and ears) and prevent their hair from being tangled on shoulder straps. Some swimmers wear these caps under a latex racing cap to reduce hair pulling when the swimmer takes their cap off. Also, since these caps are made from the same Lycra® as swim suits, it is possible to find a lycra® swim cap that matches swimsuit colors for a fully coordinated outfit.

INSULATED CAPS help keep your head warm when swimming in cold water. The Barracuda Hothead cap has thick insulated construction and covers the full head and ears. These caps also usually are worn in a bright orange color which provides visibility when you are swimming in open waters.

STRAP CAPS are a solid molded rubber cap with molded ear flaps and a strap that fits under the chin. This strap helps keep the cap in place, and helps keep the ear flaps down to keep water away from the ears and hair. Very traditional looking, these caps are extremely popular and are great sellers.

Prolonged exposure to chlorine can cause start to eat away at the corneal surface of the eye. This may cause itchy, irritated eyes, or temporary blindness. Contact lens wearers fear the loss of contact lenses, and often swim their eyes closed. If you wear a goggle, you can open your eyes, and not worry about losing a lens. Also, contact lenses may protect you from the above mentioned problems, but they actually increase the risk of one getting an infection from microorganisms in the water.

Therefore, swimming goggles can protect your eyes from these ailments. Also, when swimming outdoors, swim goggles can protect your eyes from ultraviolet radiation, and they can also have a tinted lens to shield you from the sun.

If you wear a prescription, swim goggles can be fit with your prescription in them to help you see underwater.

Here's what to look for:

* **Ultraviolet Protection:** If you are swimming outdoors, make sure your goggle protects you from ultraviolet radiation. (For more on UV, see UV and its Effects on the Eyes).

* **Proper Seal:** The most important thing is selecting a goggle is a proper seal. For a goggle to properly work, it must create a good seal so water cannot seep into the goggle. You want the goggle to fit on the bone around the eyes, not inside the eye socket itself. An improperly fit goggle will cause "raccoon eyes". This is because the goggle rests on the socket, instead of the bone, and cuts off circulation. Also, the goggle must seal completely. Put the goggle on and make sure you can see no visible gaps between the goggle and your face. If making a prescription in the lens, you may want to take the goggle home first, and make sure it seals properly before you go through the expense of a prescription lens.

* **Lens Color:** If swimming outdoors, you may want to put a slight tint in the lens to help block the amount of sunlight getting to your eyes. A smoke lens is still light enough to see underwater, but can block enough light so you don't have to squint.
