

SHARK SAFETY TIPS

- Don't swim where seals are present
- Don't swim too far from shore
- Avoid swimming early and late in the day (when sharks tend to feed)
- Swim in groups
- Avoid wearing shiny jewelry or other accessories (which look like fish scales to a shark)
- Avoid cloudy water (sharks could mistake you for prey)
- Avoid surfing alone
- Avoid areas with signs of baitfish or fish feeding activity - watch for diving seabirds
- Be aware that sharks may be present between sandbars or near steep drop offs

SWIMMERS AND WADERS CAUTION

DANGEROUS CURRENTS
A current can carry you away from the shore and you could get lost or injured. Look for warning signs and heed the advice of lifeguards.

SHARK ADVISORY
Great white sharks live in these waters. They may bite people who are swimming or surfing.

BEACH RULES
• Don't swim alone
• Don't swim where seals are present
• Don't swim too far from shore
• Don't swim early and late in the day
• Don't wear shiny jewelry or accessories
• Don't surf alone

RESOURCE PROTECTION
• Don't litter
• Don't use sunscreen that contains oxybenzone or octinoxate
• Don't use reef-safe sunscreen

SHARK SIGHTINGS

- Notify a lifeguard or a parking lot attendant if a shark is spotted
- Shark reports will be investigated quickly
- Beaches will be temporarily closed to swimming or surfing
- Signs will be posted about shark sightings and beach closures
- Beach goers will be notified when they can re-enter the water



DORSAL FINN FREQUENTLY MISTAKEN FOR GREAT WHITE SHARKS



great white dorsal fin

- **Ocean Sunfish** - not a shark, but a very large harmless fish that moves its fin up and down



- **Basking Shark** - second largest living fish. A slow moving harmless shark that feeds on tiny shrimp-like plankton



In addition to white and basking sharks, sand tiger sharks, sandbar sharks, smooth dogfish, and spiny dogfish frequently visit Massachusetts coastal waters. However, these smaller (< 5 feet), harmless sharks are not likely to be seen at the surface.

SHARK FACTS

- Sharks have existed for more than 400-million years
- As top predators, sharks are critical for maintaining a healthy and balanced marine ecosystem
- Sharks are slow growing, late to mature, and produce few offspring making them extremely vulnerable and slow to recover from overexploitation
- A number of shark species are considered threatened or endangered
- Great white sharks are a prohibited species in Massachusetts. It is illegal to harvest them
- It is estimated that 70 to over 100 million sharks are harvested each year, some of which are killed just for their fins



Great white sharks have been drawn back to the Cape because of a growing seal population, which has rebounded after nearly being hunted to extinction. Shark attacks are rare events. Millions of us swim in the oceans each year, with just a handful of attacks. The only way to completely rule out a close encounter with a shark is to stay on the shore.

Through research we gain a better understanding of sharks and their behavior, which will allow us to improve public safety.



OTHER RESOURCES

Massachusetts Shark Research Program

Division of Marine Fisheries
www.mass.gov/marinefisheries

Global Shark Tracking OCEARCH

www.ocearch.org

Supporting Local Shark Research and Education

Atlantic White Shark Conservancy
www.atlanticwhiteshark.org

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CAPE COD GREAT WHITE SHARK SAFETY



Cape Cod's waters are part of a natural and wild marine ecosystem with a rich diversity of sea life, including sharks.

This brochure provides important shark safety tips for beach goers and some facts about sharks.

Cape Cod & The Islands