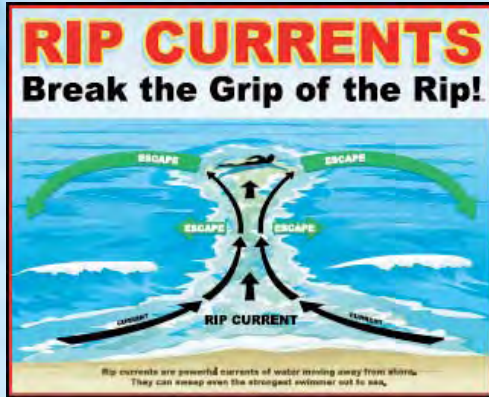


## Safety advice for swimmers

### How can you identify a rip tide?

It is difficult for the average tourist, but here are a few things to look for:



- 1- A channel of turbulent water moving out to sea.
- 2- An area that has a visibly unusual color, usually due to the swirling sediment from the beach.
- 3- A formation of foam, algae, or litter moving uniformly out to sea.
- 4- A disturbance in the waveline coming to shore.
- 5- One or all of the aforementioned, however, may not be visible. This is the case with beach that have thick sediment or white-sand beaches like Cocles beach on the Caribbean side and the interior beaches of Manuel Antonio, to name a few...

### How can people avoid problems with these currents?

- 1- Learning to swim, or not going into the water if you are not a swimmer.
- 2- If you like to surf, you should know how to swim in conditions that surf areas present. It is not the same as swimming in a lake or swimming pool..
- 3- Never swimming alone.
- 4- Swimming close to lifeguards.
- 5- Looking for signs, notices, or warning flags indicating possible dangers to swimmers. Normally red flags will indicate danger.
- 6- Talk with lifeguards or locals in the area before entering the water.
- 7- Follow all instructions from lifeguards or authorized persons.
- 8- Be cautious. Always assume that riptides are present, even if they aren't.
- 9- If unsure, don't go into the water.

### What can I do if a rip tide gets a hold of me?

- 1- Try to stay calm to conserve energy.
- 2- Don't fight the current.
- 3- Swim perpendicular to the current or parallel to the beach.
- 4- Once you feel that you are free of the current, swim to shore.
- 5- If unable to do the aforementioned, wade in the water. The force of the current lessens as it goes out to sea. When the current diminishes, swim toward the shore.
- 6- If, at any moment, you feel that you cannot reach the shore, get someone's attention: face the beach, wave your arms, and shout for help.



## How can you help someone being dragged by a riptide?

- 1- Ask a lifeguard for help.
- 2- If there is no lifeguard, ask someone to call 911, or the Red Cross directly.
- 3- Throw the victim something that floats: a cooler, a life jacket, an inflatable ball.
- 4- Shout instructions on how to escape.
- 5- Do not help directly unless you have specific training. Many have died trying to save others.
- 6- Look for information on ocean conditions on various websites.
- 7- When you go to the beach, ask the lifeguard, or locals, of the possibilities of riptide, or other threats that may arise.

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# Safety advice for swimmers

# Tourist Service

Costa Rica Tourist Board

