



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. Seals are the major prey species for the great white shark, and as the seal population increases, the great white shark has become more numerous.

In recent years there have been confirmed reports of great white sharks feeding on seals close to shore as well as great white shark sightings from spotter planes flying along the Outer Cape near swimming beaches. While it is rare for a great white shark to bite a human, it did occur in Truro in 2012.

Be shark smart.

To stay safe and to protect wildlife:

- Follow instructions of lifeguards and national seashore staff. Become familiar with the beach flag warning system. Take time to read signage at the beaches.
- Do not swim near seals.
- Swim close to shore, where your feet can touch the bottom.
- Swim, paddle, kayak, and surf in groups.
- Do not swim alone in the ocean at dawn and dusk.
- Avoid isolation.
- Limit splashing and do not wear shiny jewelry.
- Keep your distance (at least 150 feet) from seals, whether they are resting on land or are in the water. It is against the law to disturb them.

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Shark Sightings

- Notify a lifeguard if a shark is spotted.
- Beaches will be temporarily closed to swimming or surfing.
- Beach goers will be notified when they can re-enter the water.

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.
- Great white shark numbers have increased on the Cape because of a growing seal population which has rebounded after being hunted to near extinction.

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

Link here to Cape Cod
National Seashore's
website.

