

High-Adventure Risk Advisory to Health-Care Providers and Parents

Phone: 305-664-4173

Website: www.bsaseabase.org

Florida Sea Base

Sea Base Experience. Sea Base adventures are not risk-free. Participants must follow safety measures and take personal responsibility for their health and safety. Climate conditions include temperatures ranging from 45 to 95 degrees, high humidity, heat indexes reaching 110 degrees, and frequent, sometimes severe tropical weather. Prolonged, rigorous activities include snorkeling, scuba diving, kayaking, canoeing, sailing, hiking, and others.

It is the responsibility of participants, participant parents or guardians, participant health-care teams, and unit leaders to see that each individual—youth or adult—can safely take part in Sea Base adventures.

Adult Participants. It is the role of accompanying adults to ensure youth safety. Because of this, adult participants must arrive in good physical condition and have no medical conditions that could result in diverting the Sea Base staff's attention away from youth participants.

Sea Base participants must be able to

- Swim in a strong manner
- Climb a 6-foot ladder, unassisted, in inclement weather, from the water onto a rocking vessel
- Self-rescue if found overboard in inclement weather

Location. Sea Base adventures are conducted at sea, often far from land, with limited access to emergency services. **Response times can be affected by weather, seas, and location, and can be delayed for hours.** Individuals with medical conditions that require immediate or nearly immediate access to professional medical care should not attend Sea Base.

Right to Refuse. Sea Base reserves the right to deny participation based on health and safety concerns and/or medical history.

Special Needs or Medical Concerns. Any individual with special needs or medical concerns must have an onsite advocate who understands the individual's condition and treatment and who is prepared to provide support to the individual.

Trained Leadership. Each crew is required to have at least one adult who is trained in wilderness first aid and CPR or has a greater professional medical certification. This leader acts as the primary first response until emergency services arrive. There are no on-site facilities for treatment or extended care at Sea Base. Sea Base does not staff professional medical personnel.

Medications. Individuals requiring medication should continue medications as prescribed and bring an appropriate supply. Each crew must develop a plan to secure, lock, and dispense medication.

Allergies. Participants with allergies that may result in severe reactions or anaphylaxis should bring an adequate supply of epinephrine auto-injectors (EpiPen) to last up to three hours.

Recommendations Regarding Chronic Illness and/or Compromised Immune System.

Persons with chronic conditions and/or compromised immune systems should seek medical advice and education regarding medical risks associated with harsh marine environments before participating. Individuals with open wounds or who are at risk for chronic illnesses or immune disorders should not attend Sea Base.

Hypertension (High Blood Pressure). Participants should have a blood pressure less than 140/90. Individuals with hypertension should have the condition treated and well-controlled before attending.

Insulin-Dependent Diabetes Mellitus. Diabetes must be well-controlled. Hypoglycemia can lead to unconsciousness and drowning.

- Insulin-dependent persons who have been newly diagnosed or who have undergone changes in delivery systems in the last six months are advised not to participate.
- Persons with diabetes who have had frequent problems and/or hospitalizations should not participate.
- Persons using insulin to control diabetes **will not** be permitted to **scuba dive**.
- Any HbA1c test greater than 7 in the previous 12 months **disqualifies** a person from **scuba diving**.
- Persons under the age of 18 who control their diabetes with exercise and diet (without the aid of medication) and can provide three sequential hemoglobin tests with HbA1c values less than 6 **may** be approved to scuba dive.
- Persons over the age of 18 who control their diabetes with exercise and diet (without the aid of medication) and can provide four HbA1c tests, each with a value less than 7, within the previous 12 months **may** be approved to scuba dive.

Seizures (Epilepsy). Seizures while snorkeling or scuba diving are extremely dangerous and often fatal.

- History of loss of consciousness often precludes snorkeling or scuba diving. Formal consultation with a neurologist and/or cardiologist is required.
- No participant with a history of seizures or taking anti-epileptic medication may **snorkel or scuba dive**.
—Prospective participants with a history of infant febrile seizures **may be considered for snorkeling or diving** after formal consultation with a neurologist.

Asthma. Asthma must be well-controlled. Persons requiring use of medication and/or an inhaler must bring an ample supply.

- Persons being treated for **asthma (including reactive airway disease) are disqualified from scuba diving**.
- Persons with a history of asthma who have been asymptomatic **and** have not used medications to control asthma for five years or more **may be allowed to scuba dive** if resolution of asthma is specifically confirmed by their physician and includes provocative pulmonary function testing conducted by a pulmonologist.
—Provocative testing can include exercise, hypertonic saline, a hyperpnea test, etc.



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Recent Musculoskeletal Injuries and Orthopedic Surgery.

Persons with musculoskeletal problems or orthopedic surgeries within the last six months must provide a letter from their treating physician to participate.

Psychological and Emotional Difficulties.

Any condition should be well-controlled without the services of a mental health practitioner. Participants requiring medication must bring an ample supply and take as prescribed for the duration of their trip.

- Many psychotropic medications are not compatible with **scuba diving**.
- Persons taking more than one psychotropic medication **will not be cleared to scuba dive**.
- Persons with anxiety **will not be cleared to scuba dive**.

Weight Limits.

Participants must meet BSA height and weight guidelines. Exceptions **may** be made for individuals who do not exceed the BSA height and weight guidelines by more than 20 pounds. Due to rescue equipment weight restrictions, individuals who are 78 inches (6.5 feet) and taller cannot be offered an exception.

Scuba Participants.

Persons with conditions listed as severe by the Recreational Scuba Training Council (RSTC) **will not be permitted to scuba dive**. Persons with conditions prohibited by BSA scuba policy **will not be permitted to scuba dive**. Various risk factors may exclude a person from scuba diving, either temporarily or permanently. Risk factors include, but are not limited to, ear and sinus problems, recent surgery, spontaneous pneumothorax, asthma or reactive airway disease, seizure disorders, diabetes, leukemia, sickle-cell disease, pregnancy, panic disorders, active psychosis, certain medications, and narcolepsy.

Closing.

Sea Base, BSA is an industry leader in maritime adventures with an excellent safety record. If you have questions regarding medical policies, medical concerns, or medical approval, please contact Sea Base at 305-664-4173.



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