

 <p>Medical Center DIVING MEDICINE ONLINE</p>	<h1>Diving Medicine Online</h1> <p>Comprehensive information about diving and undersea medicine for the non-medical diver, the non-diving physician and the specialist.</p>	<p>Search This Site Search this site powered by FreeFind</p>
---	--	---

Diving Teens

[Download This Site pdf](#)

[DOWNLOAD](#) Teen Age Diving
by Maida Taylor, MD

[Scuba Board Thread About Children Divers](#)
[Contains Undercurrent Article by DocVikingo]

[Why I Do Not Train Kids](#)
by Larry "Harris" Taylor, PhD

Sport diving imposes no legal limits on age, but most diver training organizations require candidates to be 15 years old for full certification. Training is provided to younger candidates who receive conditional certification until age 15. Ordinarily, the minimum age is 12; the age of ten seems to be quite young to us.

Variable rate of growth

The rate of development, growth and maturity of teens varies greatly and the age which they can take up sport diving is not uniform because of the psychological, intellectual and physical factors.

Maturity

Traits that are important -good judgment, responsibility, attention to detail and respect for rules are traits that may be slow to develop in some teens.

Intellectual maturity

They must be able to understand the physics and biology involved with an ability to understand the dangers without being frightened.

Scuba training should be a completely inappropriate activity for a young person unless the interest in diving comes from a strong personal interest.

Generally, the ages 14-16 are the times to start--gifted and mature teens may possess the above abilities sooner. Of course, there is always the exception to the rule, and many 11, 12 and 13 year olds who are physically and mentally capable of handling the heavy equipment and the training can be taught to dive.

Fitness considerations for young divers should be directed towards emotional maturity, ability to learn and understand the requisite physiologic, physical and environmental data needed for safe diving, and towards strength requirements necessary for handling diving equipment.

Physically, the young diver should be near 45 kg. (108 lb.) and 150 cm. tall (60 inches). He/she should be able to handle the bulky diving equipment and should be able to enter and exit the water without difficulty. Cold stress and buoyancy control pose special problems for the person of smaller stature, particularly on the surface in a suit. Gear size can be reduced and smaller tanks utilized.

Growth plates

Children divers should use dive profiles which minimize risk for decompression sickness to eliminate concern for injury to growing tissues, such as the growth plates of bones. There are no good studies that indicate that the growth plates (epiphyseal plates) are a particular problem -- just supposition that an area of increased vascularity "might" be more susceptible to bubbles. Since the damage that can be done to bone is in direct proportion to the length of time at depth, it would appear that these factors should be restricted in the growing teen-ager who has a life-time of diving ahead. Arbitrary depths and times have to be chosen to maintain low levels of onboard nitrogen; carefully monitored ascent rates with safety deco stops are definitely suggested.

Patent foramen ovale

It is known that the rate of closure of a patent foramen ovale is highly variable and a certain percentage of children will not have closed their defect by age 10. Because of this late closure in some individuals, it is possible that the percentage of children with PFO and right to left shunt could be even higher than the known rate of 25% in the general population. Programs allowing surface-supplied air (SSA) to be provided to children as young as 5 would seem to be conducive to bubbles accessing the arterial circulation with disastrous central nervous system manifestations.

'Buddy' responsibility

In addition, the child should be physically, mentally and emotionally mature enough to rescue a 'buddy' in distress. This final caveat may be the 'kicker' that would prevent a 10 year old from becoming certified.

Teen Classes

I strongly recommend that children take lessons with other teens-not in a mixed class with adults; and, that the instructor be knowledgeable about teens, and have a supportive style without the "macho" attitude that some instructors exhibit, often humiliating members of the class.

Should not be 'dragooned' by a parent or sibling

Finally, there is nothing worse than being "dragooned" into diving. For those who are too small to use diving equipment comfortably, or who are too young intellectually there are alternatives to diving which will prepare them for diving later, ie., swimming in waves and currents, underwater swimming, swimming with fins or kickboard and snorkeling offers a great transition to diving for youngsters.

References

<http://www.scuba-doc.com/download/Teendive.zip>

This is a downloadable article by Dr. Maida Taylor

Bar-Or-O: Pediatric Sports

Medicine for the Practitioner from Physiologic Principles to Clinical Applications, NY, Springer Verlag, 1983

Bar-Or-O: Climate and the Exercising Child-a review: Int J Sports Med 1980, 1:53

Branta C, Haubenstricker J, and Seefeldt V: Age changes in motor skills during childhood and adolescence. Exerc Sport Sci Rev 1984,12:467

Dembert ML, Keith JF; Evaluating the Potential pediatric scuba diver. Am J Dis Child 1986; 140:1135-1141



Please MOVE AND HOLD your MOUSE CURSOR over the little DOWN ARROWS in the translated web page in order to see a pop-up window with ALTERNATIVE TRANSLATIONS.



Diver's Alert Network

Disclaimer

'Diving Medicine Online' does not endorse any of the medications, products or treatments described, mentioned or discussed in any of the services, databases or pages accessible within or from 'Diving Medicine Online', and makes no representations concerning the efficacy, appropriateness or suitability of any such products or treatments.

You are encouraged to consult other sources and confirm the information contained in any of the services, databases or pages accessible within or from 'Diving Medicine Online'. If erroneous or otherwise inaccurate information is brought to our attention, a reasonable effort will be made to correct or delete it. Such problems should immediately be reported to scubadoc@scuba-doc.com



We subscribe to the [HONcode principles](#) of the [Health On the Net Foundation](#)
We adhere to the '[Guidelines for Medical and Health Information Sites on the Internet](#)' of the
American Medical Association.

The contents of this site are copyright © 1996-2004,
[Ernest Campbell, MD, FACS](#) All Rights Reserved.



[Home](#) > [Age and Diving](#) > [Diving Teens](#)

[Register & Questions](#) || [DiveMed Email Logon](#) || [FAQ](#) || [Newsletter](#) || [Websearch](#) || [Medline](#) || [Bookstore](#) || [Conferences](#) || [Email Us](#) ||
[Contact Us](#) || [Glossary](#) || [Medical Center](#) || [Dictionary](#) || [Links](#) || [Bulletin Board](#) || [Translate](#)

Last updated: undefined

