

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: *My ears hurt when I go to the bottom of a swimming pool. Will that keep me from becoming a scuba diver?*

A: *No, assuming you have no irregularities in your ears and sinuses. The discomfort is the normal effect of water pressure pressing in on your ears. Fortunately, our bodies are designed to adjust for pressure changes in our ears – you just need to learn how.*

Q: *Does a history of ear troubles, diabetes, asthma, allergies or smoking preclude someone from diving?*

A: *Not necessarily. Any condition that affects the ears, sinuses, respiratory function, heart function or may alter consciousness is a concern, but only a physician can assess a person's individual risk, if needed you will be directed to see your physician when you complete the medical questionnaire. Physicians can consult with the Divers Alert Network (DAN) as necessary when assessing a scuba candidate. www.daneurope.org*

Q: *What are the most common injuries or sicknesses associated with diving?*

A: *Sun burn and seasickness, both of which are preventable with over the counter preventatives. The most common injuries caused by marine life are scrapes and stings, most of which can be avoided by wearing an exposure suit, staying off the bottom and watching where you put your hands and feet.*

Q: *How deep do you go?*

A: *With the necessary training and experience, the limit for recreational scuba diving is 40 metres/130 feet. 'Open water divers' stay shallower than 18 metres/60 feet. Although these are the limits, some of the most popular diving is no deeper than 12 metres/40 feet where the water's warmer and the colours are brighter.*

Q: *What happens if I use up all my air?*

A: *That's not likely because you have a gauge that tells you how much air you have at all times. This way, you can return to the surface with a safety reserve remaining. But to answer the question, if you run out of air, your buddy has a spare mouthpiece that allows you to share a single air supply while swimming to the surface. There are also other options you'll learn in training.*

Q: *What if I feel claustrophobic?*

A: *Although wearing a lot of equipment may seem awkward, many people find the "weightlessness" of scuba diving to be quite freeing. Modern dive masks are available in translucent models, which you may prefer if a mask makes you feel closed in. During your training, your instructor gives you plenty of time and coaching to become comfortable with each stage of learning. Your instructor works with you at your own pace to ensure you master each skill necessary to become a capable diver who dives regularly.*