

## COACH FRANK'S COLD OPEN WATER SWIMMING TIPS

When swimming in cold open water, it's important not to let your body experience a sudden "shock" by jumping straight into a workout or race. If possible, enter the water beforehand to begin the acclimation process. Start by taking a few steps in and pausing to assess the water temperature against your body. Pay attention to how it affects your heart rate and breathing.

Take a moment to check in with yourself—notice how your chest feels when breathing in your wetsuit. Focus on taking **full, controlled breaths** with a steady 4-count inhale, followed by a **complete** 4-count exhale.

Next, gradually dip your face into the water. Slowly lower yourself just enough to submerge your face, then lift it back out. Repeat this a few times at a slow and comfortable pace.

Finally, immerse your body fully by pulling the neck of your wetsuit out, allowing water to enter. For a few seconds, it will feel cold, but your body temperature will quickly warm the water trapped between your skin and the neoprene, providing an insulating layer.

Below are some helpful tips to ensure your next cold open water swim goes smoothly!

### TIPS TO HANDLE COLD WATER:

**Don't leave home without your jug.** A jug or large bottle of hot water poured into your wetsuit and over your head just before entering the water will help the acclimation process.

**An extra swim cap will help to keep in the heat.** Most thermal release from the body happens from the top of the head. To keep a lid on the heat double up on swim caps. A neoprene hood under a swim cap is also a great option. Extra tip: If wearing two swim caps, place your goggles between caps to prevent them being knocked off.

**Ear plugs will help prevent the feeling of vertigo** that can be caused by cold water entering the inner ear. The disorientation can make you run in every-direction-but-straight as you struggle to get your land legs. A pair of silicone ear plugs work great or a package of Mac's which are available at most grocery stores.

### WETSUIT TIPS:

**Body Glide , Chamois Butt'r Stik or other anti chafe product** applied on heels, ankles and elbows will greatly assist in getting into and out of a wetsuit. When applied to neck and underarms it can help eliminate body discomfort at points of friction. Once the wetsuit gets past the knee area it's easier to shimmy up the remaining distance.

**Swim a few strokes and then stop to adjust the fit of your wetsuit.** It should start to loosen up a bit so it can be adjusted to fit more snug. Rotate into a vertical position and pull up the legs more so the inseam area can fit more snug. You should be able to adjust the torso area to allow freer arm movement and less restricted breathing.