

Diving with Sharks

Sharks are part of the environment at most of our dive sites worldwide. It is important to be aware of the types of sharks in your area and any inherent hazards they may create. It is also important to remember that diving incidents from sharks are rare, however, there may be times when there is evidence of shark activity that causes a heightened level of concern and if this occurs at your dive site it is recommended that diving operations be cancelled for the day and the Diving Safety Officer be notified. When diving in an area where sharks may be of concern it is recommended to incorporate as many the following recommendations to your dive plan as possible.

Communication

- All divers, boat operators and surface support should be made aware of the inherent hazards and be especially attentive to surroundings.
- Diver recall strategies from the boat should be reviewed.
- Buddy teams should maintain effective communication during the dive so as to notify the other teams if any shark activity of concern is observed.

Dive Plan and Diver Behavior

- Anchor the boat as close to the dive location as possible.
- Surface swims should be minimized.
- Know compass heading back to the anchor line and as a backup if possible, directly to the shore.
- Ascend as a group or back to back with buddy, surfacing near the boat if possible.
- If the situation dictates a direct ascent to the surface, skipping a safety stop is OK. Ascend as slow as you can but as fast as you need.
- Be prepared to enter the vessel as quickly as possible, ditching BC and weight belt if necessary.

Individual Decision

- Each diver needs to assess all the various risk for each dive and make their own decision about their ability to safely complete the dive. Any diver may, without fear of penalty, refuse to make a dive for any reason.
- Remember a stressed diver is an unsafe diver. All divers need to keep in mind that it is OK to, and you are expected to, sit out the dive if there are concerns about any aspect of the dive or diving environment: current, surge, depth, limited visibility, marine hazards, etc.