

Medical Issues

Q. How do I know if I'm medically fit enough to dive?

A. All BSAC and SAA clubs are required to get prospective members to complete a Self-Declaration Medical Form before joining. The form highlights any issues that may preclude you from diving.

Q. If I answer 'Yes' to any of the questions on the form, what do I do and who do I do speak to if I am unsure about whether an illness in the past will stop me diving?

A. The first thing to do is to telephone your local Medical Referee. Medical Referees are listed on the reverse of the Self-Declaration Form or you can check the UK Sports Diving Medical Committee's website or the BSAC website for the most up-to-date list of Referees.

From your initial telephone enquiry and the information you give to a Medical Referee they may:

- Say you can complete the self-declaration yourself.
- Need to contact your own doctor for further information and on this result, may endorse your self-declaration form. All this will involve is sending the Self-Declaration form to the Referee with a stamped addressed envelope for return of the endorsed form to you. There may be a charge for this.
- Require you to visit them for a medical examination before a Certificate of Fitness to dive can be issued. There will be a charge for this.

Q. If I answer 'Yes' to any of the questions on the form, will I then have to contact a Medical Referee every year?

A. The first thing to do is to telephone your local Medical Referee. Following the outcome of this consultation the Medical Referee will either indicate that in the future you can complete the self-declaration without further consultation unless there is a change in your health, or that you do not need to consult again for a specified period of time or you may have to see the Referee on an annual basis. The periods and frequency will be judged by the Referee in the light of the underlying condition.

Q. What happens if a diver signs the Medical Self-Declaration Form stating that all is OK, but is hiding a past illness?

A. The Form is a legal declaration. If a diver is found to have been untruthful and an accident occurs then that diver will be uninsured and may be held individually liable for the consequences.

Q. What if I have had DCI but been cleared to dive? Or: What if I have a condition listed on the Medical Self-Declaration Form but have been cleared to dive by a Medical Referee?

A. The Medical Referee will have issued you with a Certificate of Fitness to Dive. This certificate may cover a certain time period or be a clearance that self-declaration can be completed by the diver for the future. Provided the Medical Referee has given you the all clear, then there will not be a problem.

Q. Supposing different advice has been given from another medical source compared to a Medical Referee? Who do I go to seek advice or clarification?

A. The UK Sport Diving Medical Committee is the final court of appeal for divers, and Referees are able to refer to the committee for advice.



Q. What happens if I have a Diving Related Illness after filling in the Self-Declaration Form?

A. Any member who suffers a decompression-related illness (DCI, Burst Lung, etc.) must be declared fit by a Medical Referee.

Q. What happens when I travel abroad and need a medical to dive?

A. If diving abroad, please note a full diving medical may be required. Medical Form B can be obtained from BSAC HQ and taken to the doctor conducting the examination.

Q. How long is the Medical Self-Certification Form valid for?

A. The self-declaration is valid for one year, unless there is a significant change in your health. For ease of administration both BSAC and SAA have tied the self-declaration in with the annual Membership renewals and so Members should complete the self-declaration at the time they renew. New members would complete the self-declaration at the time they join BSAC/SAA and then at subsequent renewals.

Q. Can I choose to have a Medical with my GP instead of Self-Declaration?

A. The requirement to meet the BSAC Medical Fitness to Dive is for completion of a Medical Self-Declaration. Whilst you may choose to have a Medical anyway this does not replace the self-declaration process.

Q. Can the Diving Officer request a fitness test?

A. Yes the D.O. can carry out a simple test in the pool. The initial swimming evaluation forms just such an effective test. Alternatively the member could be referred to his or her GP for a fitness test.