

WRSTC Endorses New Medical Screening System

On **June 9th, 2020**, the World Recreational Scuba Training Council endorsed a new recreational scuba diving and freediving medical screening system. The following is an overview of that system.

Three-part system

1. [Diver Medical Participant Questionnaire*](#) is completed by the diving candidate.
2. [Diver Medical Physician's Evaluation Form*](#) is completed by the physician evaluating the diving candidate for diving suitability when a physician's approval to dive is necessary.
3. [Diving Medical Guidance*](#) is a peer-reviewed reference for physicians seeking additional information regarding how specific conditions relate to diving.

* Available on the [UHMS website](#).

System Goals/Purposes

The system was developed over three years by the Diver Medical Screen Committee (DMSC) a body of international [diving medicine experts](#). The aims of the project were to:

1. Reflect current medical thinking and evidence-based screening criteria.
2. Allow as many individuals to dive as reasonably possible.
3. Be user-friendly for diving participants, supervising diving professionals and physicians.
4. Identify and inform potential participants who may be at significant risk if they dive that they need to secure medical evaluation of that risk.
5. Include guidance on the screening of divers who have been diagnosed as having COVID-19.
6. Assist Doctors of Medicine evaluating diving candidates in making informed decisions as to whether or not the candidate is at significant risk for diving, by providing medical background support and references.

Development and Endorsement

Beyond the endorsement of the diver medical screening system by its developers, the DMSC, the new screening system reflects input from the Undersea & Hyperbaric Medical Society (UHMS) Diving Committee, Divers Alert Network America, Divers Alert Network Europe and the Hyperbaric Medicine Division, University of California, San Diego.



The [WRSTC](#) has endorsed the use of the Diver Medical Participant Questionnaire as an open source document to all recreational diver training organizations in its membership.

The [UHMS](#) provides global access to the Diving Medical Guidance document via the [UHMS website](#). The guidance document also includes references to medical journals and additional sources of related information to help medical professionals make informed decisions about a candidate's medical suitability for recreational scuba diving and freediving.

History

The Recreational Scuba Training Council (RSTC) Medical Statement was first published in 1989. Since then, this tool has been the most frequently used method of efficiently and effectively screening scuba divers and freedivers for training or diving activity participation. The Diver Medical Screening Committee commenced work on the new medical screening system in 2017. The new model was globally field-tested for efficacy and completed for release to the diving community in 2020.

Transitioning to the new medical screening system

The new protocol includes the latest thinking from the world of diving and hyperbaric medicine about the most effective way to properly screen individuals wishing to dive for potentially hazardous health issues. It is recommended that all RSTC-member training organizations and their dive center operators and instructors start using it as soon as possible, especially as the 2020 WRSTC Diver Medical addresses the issue of COVID-19.

Recognizing that it takes time to fully transition to the new form, the RSTC Medical Statement (latest copyright 2007) can still be used until dive industry professionals are able to transition to the 2020 WRSTC Diver Medical Screening System.