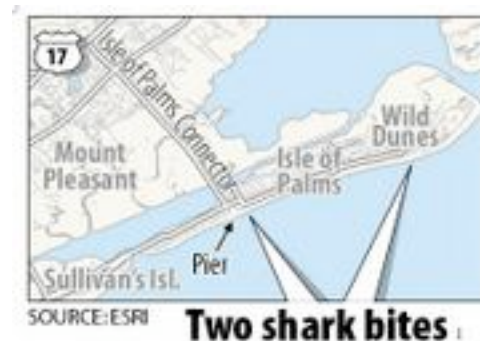


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Alan Hawes  
The Post and Courier

Isle of Palms police Sgt. Jamey Meekins advises beachgoers Will McMinoway and his daughter Brooke of Lexington, Ky., to stay out of the water Thursday after two people were bitten, likely by sharks, within a three-hour period.



Ken Hawkins/The Post and Courier

### **Beachgoers told to stay out of water after likely shark attacks**

ISLE OF PALMS — There was no scream, no great disturbance in the water, only a young boy walking out of the surf, blood running down his leg.

Just after 2 p.m. Thursday, a 9-year-old boy was bitten on the leg, most likely by a shark, north of the county park's public swimming area.

About two and a half hours later, a 30-year-old man in the water screamed for help about four blocks from the first attack. He lifted his right leg from the water and blood squirted from a 3-inch, open wound on the outside of the man's ankle. Spartanburg surgeon Rich Reinhardt said he saw a row of bite marks above the injury.

While authorities shied away from calling the incidents shark bites, Reinhardt said he was sure the injuries he saw were inflicted by a shark.

Somebody reported seeing a 4-foot fish in the water at the time the boy was hurt. Reinhardt said he didn't see anything unusual when the second person was bitten.

"It wasn't like 'Jaws' where people just see this thing swimming around," Fire Chief Ann Graham said.

Isle of Palms City Administrator Linda Lovvorn Tucker said authorities don't know if the injuries were caused by a fish and they don't know that the fish was a shark.

Still, county park lifeguards and the city cleared the water about 200 yards to either side of the pier for 45 minutes after the boy's injury, Tucker said.

When the second swimmer was injured at 4:35 p.m., they asked beachgoers to stay out of the water for the rest of the day.

Charleston County sheriff's deputies flew over the area late in the day and plan to scan the water from the air again at first light today, Tucker said. Personnel will also patrol the beach.

"If we see anything at all that concerns us, we will be exercising prudence," Tucker said, and ask people to stay out of the water.

Graham said they're attempting to get in touch with a Department of Natural Resources marine biologist to "find out why this happened."

The boy, Chase Crawford, suffered injuries to his lower leg and foot. It wasn't immediately known where Crawford lives. He was in the operating room Thursday night at Medical University Hospital.

Barb Rotter of St. Louis saw adults run to Crawford and carry the boy up on the beach. It was as close as she's ever been to a shark attack.

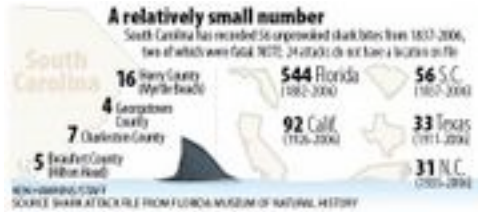
"And it was a little too close," Rotter said.

Several people said they were swimming close to the boy, who was about 10 yards off the beach, in the moments before the attack.

"I was close, I was right behind him," said Morgan Smith, who's from West Virginia. "I saw them carrying him, but I didn't see the shark."

Scott Wilkerson of Newberry said he heard people saying the shark "bit him and then twisted him." Wilkerson had just walked out of the water.

"I had just come in," he said.



Ken Hawkins/The Post and Courier

The second injured swimmer was identified by his sister as Noah Green of Nebraska. His sister said his leg may be broken. He was listed in stable condition Thursday night at East Cooper Regional Medical Center.

Reinhardt said Green was in about chest-deep water when he started screaming that he needed help. Reinhardt and others on the beach pulled Green to shore and Reinhardt applied pressure to the bleeding wound and put a tourniquet on the man's leg.

"We've been coming here for 15 years. To have two (bites) in one day, it's freaky," Reinhardt said. He said he and his three children would be "spending a little more time at the pool."

On what was one of the hottest — if not the hottest — days of the year, the beach was packed with folks, many of whom were heading into the water to beat a triple-digit heat index.

The heat eventually began to overtake fear of the water. Heather Rotter said that even though she saw the attack on the child, she wasn't staying on shore much longer.

"Oh, I'll go back in," she said.

And Smith said she was counting the minutes until the police reopened the beach for swimming.

"It was an accident," Smith said. "I don't think the shark was intentionally trying to hurt him."