0448 **EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SURVEILLANCE OF DROWNINGS: A NATIONAL SURVEY IN FRANCE, 1 JUNE–30 SEPTEMBER 2009**

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Objective To describe the characteristics and the risk factors of unintentional drowning in France, and to contribute to their prevention.

Method A prospective survey was set up in the whole country from June to September 2009. All unintentional drownings were recorded, once followed by hospitalization or death.

Results This survey recorded 1366 drownings, among them 462 (34%) were followed by death. Children under 6 years represented 14% (197, thereof 39 deaths); adults over 45 years accounted for 41% (566, thereof 257 deaths).

The distribution by drowning place was the following: 186 drownings in private swimming pools (48 followed by death), 53 in public swimming pools (6 deaths), 151 in streams (97 deaths), 144 in lakes (96 deaths), 781 in sea water (187 deaths) and 51 in other places (28 deaths). Demographic characteristics of the victims and circumstances of drowning depended on the place of drowning. In private swimming pools, children under 6 years of age mainly drowned due to the lack of parental surveillance and swimming ability. In streams and lakes, drowning was more frequent among adults after a fall, or when engaged in solitary activities, or after having consumed alcohol. In sea water, many victims were tourists over 45 years with a health problem.

Conclusion These results lead to conclude that specific prevention messages should be strengthened: careful surveillance of young children; learning to swim the earliest possible; swimming in supervised areas; not overestimating ones physical capabilities; inquiring about the state of the sea and the meteorological conditions.