

TIP OF THE MONTH

Instead of swimming laps try walking forward and backward in the water.



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**PHYSICAL THERAPY
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Benefits From Aquatic Exercise



Benefits From Aquatic Exercise



Presented by:



**PHYSICAL THERAPY
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Aquatic exercise can help you recover from many common injuries, orthopedic issues, or even every day aches and pains. Low back pain, joint replacements, arthritis, balance disorders, fibromyalgia, obesity, pregnancy, neurological disorders, osteoporosis, circulatory insufficiency and other common issues respond well to movement and exercise in the water.

The beneficial effects of water include decreased pain, decreased edema (swelling), increased ROM (range of motion), decreased weight bearing on joints, support of weak muscles, decreased risk of falling, social interaction and decreased spasticity (or excessive muscle tone).

Many of us have access to the water through a pool at home in the summer months, but consider joining a health club or local indoor pool during inclement weather. There is much more you can do in the water than float or swim in it!

Many techniques and exercise protocols have been developed to better utilize water for its therapeutic benefits. It is not necessary to know how to swim to take advantage of the buoyant or resistive properties of exercising in water. Most exercises can be done in the shallow end where the water is only chest deep. In deeper water, both swimmers and non-swimmers can use a belt to help with floatation for exercises such as jogging. The water allows people who may not be able to exercise because of pain or balance disorders the option of adding basic exercise back into their lives. Most exercises require no or minimal equipment to be effective.



Aquatic exercise classes are available that are taught by Physical Therapists or Physical Therapy Assistants with aquatic certification and generally a life guard is present. This will allow you individual attention to learn the exercises that would be most beneficial for you. Once you learn the exercises you will be able to exercise with confidence at the pool of your choice. Some local health clubs and fitness centers offer aquatic classes as well, but be sure you discuss what is appropriate for you to do in the water with your physician or therapist prior to beginning any new program.

Written Megan Andrews, PTA
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