

Q & A – ASK THE EXPERTS AT UNF

<p>WHY IS WATER EXERCISE WORTH CONSIDERING?</p>	<p>Any person, any age, non-swimmer or swimmer, at any fitness level from sedentary to active can benefit from aquatic exercise. Exercising in the water is a fun, safe way to achieve or maintain fitness. Participants feel refreshed & relaxed after a water workout.</p>
<p>WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?</p>	<p>There are numerous benefits to performing exercise in the water. The buoyancy or floating effect of water serves to greatly reduce pressure and impact, thus movements are gentle and easy on the joints, notably ankles, knees hips, back and shoulders. Because water supports the body while exercising, the muscles and joints are allowed a much greater, fuller range of comfortable movements. Hydrostatic pressure refers to the pressure exerted by water on the immersed body; this factor can decrease swelling in joints and tissues and have a positive effect on blood pressure during and after exercise. Better circulation, a healthier heart and increased energy are additional benefits.</p>
<p>WHAT IS AN ADVANTAGE OF WATER EXERCISE COMPARED TO LAND EXERCISE?</p>	<p>Water weighs 8.5 lbs per gallon. As we move against the weight of the water our arms, legs and body experiences resistance in every direction and every movement. In water, even walking with simple arm movements provides greater benefit versus walking on land due to the water weight/resistance factor. Using the resistance of the water is an excellent way to promote and maintain muscular endurance.</p> <p>Doctors and therapists often recommend aqua exercise for overall health and fitness, as well as for conditions such as rehabilitation of knee, back, hip and shoulder injury, joint replacement, blood pressure concerns and recovery from heart attack, and posture and balance issues related to fall prevention. NOTE: before beginning any new exercise activity, all individuals should consult their physician.</p>
<p>IS AQUA EXERCISE HELPFUL FOR WEIGHT CONTROL AND WEIGHT LOSS?</p>	<p>All exercise is beneficial in these areas, however an overweight individual will experience fewer restrictions in the water, allowing more vigorous movement and more calories burned. A person may have very limited ability to move through exercise movements on land; water reduces the gravity effect, supports the body and allows the individual to move quite freely.</p>
<p>WHAT TYPES OF EXERCISES ARE DONE IN THE WATER?</p>	<p>You do not have to be a swimmer to enjoy aquatic exercise; most movements are in standing position, feet on pool bottom. At UNF, classes are multi-level meaning a person new to aqua exercise can participate with more advanced class members. Low and high intensity land based exercise modes such as yoga, pilates, cardio-aerobics, and resistance training with equipment are adapted to the water.</p>
<p>WHAT CAN SENIOR CITIZENS EXPECT TO GAIN?</p>	<p>Daily activities related to independent living are enhanced by reestablishing and maintaining good muscle balance. Water pressure reduces swelling of inflamed joints. Exercise increases energy and overall sense of well-being. the NATIONAL ARTHRITIS FOUNDATION has had an aquatic exercise program for many years and is offered at UNF.</p>

This information is submitted by:
CATH LEE MCKINIRY - WATER EXERCISE SUPERVISOR
AQUATIC EXERCISE ASSOCIATION FITNESS PROFESSIONAL
NATIONAL ARTHRITIS FOUNDATION INSTRUCTOR
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH FLORIDA - UNF AQUATIC CENTER