



Benefits of Water Aerobics

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If you're looking for a new way to exercise give water exercise a thought.

Water activity is not only about swimming. It is the perfect exercise for individuals of all ages and fitness levels. Despite what you might think, it is not essential to be a swimmer to participate in water aerobic exercise.

Water exercise has been shown to decrease blood pressure, weight, and body fat, while you are improving strength, flexibility, and range of motion. The buoyancy offered by the water causes less strain on your joints and muscles, making this type of exercise easy and less painful.

According to the American Red Cross, shallow water aerobics has been shown to improve cardiorespiratory fitness. Researchers also found that the average caloric expenditure is 5.9-6.5 kcal per minute. In other words, a water aerobic classes lasting for 45 minutes in chest deep water can burn from 265.5-292.5 calories; depending on the intensity of the participant.

Some water exercises are performed in waist level water and chest level water, while other water aerobics exercises such as jogging, are carried out in deeper water. During water jogging, the body is completely submerged and a waist floatation device is used if needed.

Deep water jogging or running is a form of water exercise more commonly used for rehabilitation for injured athletes, but is used as a form of exercise for a regular fitness routine.

The American Red Cross notes that having the whole body submerged in water not only reduces the stress on the lower part of the body, but also increases the resistance at the same time.

By increasing resistance, strength gains can be obtained. One way to accomplish this is to perform the aquatic exercise at maximum intensity for 30 seconds for 4-6 repetitions. As strength increases, more repetitions can be added, or time of maximum intensity can be lengthened. To increase strength during shallow workouts, the same format can be followed.

Most water exercise precautions are related to proper biomechanics. The American Red Cross suggests starting with good posture. Proper postural alignment involves "lining up" or balancing the body so that an imaginary vertical line would pass through the ear, then the middle of the shoulder, the center of the hip, the back of the knee, and the front of the ankle. During exercise, participants should keep knees and elbows slightly bent.

Safe and effective workouts include warm up followed by cool down, and a brief period of stretching. The warm up period give your body a chance to get adjusted to the water temperature, as well as prepares your body for the harder work ahead. It helps to gradually increase heart rate and warm muscles. Cool down is necessary to prevent the blood from pooling in extremities. Slow walking and simple range of motion exercise can qualify as both warm up and cool down exercises.

Using water exercise can cross train your body, while maintaining variety in your exercise routines.