

EXERCISE AND WATER CAN BE FUN HONEST!!!

Anyone who has arthritis knows how difficult it is to do the most simple things in life, whether it be threading a needle, undoing a jam jar, gardening, or just unlocking a door.

The thought of exercise when you are in pain is no incentive to get fit and healthy, with the additional benefits of a rich, healthy glow to one's complexion. However, Aqua exercise just may be a fun way to meet friends and get fit too!!

The benefits of hydrotherapy, and water exercise have been known for years, but applying this thought to one's situation may have been somewhat distant until now.

The buoyancy of water reduces the pressure on joints, making it possible for people with arthritis and other painful injuries to exercise with a greater range of motion, but reducing the impact normal exercise on dry land would have.

Most leisure centres with pools will have aqua aerobic classes during the day or in the evening – just sign up on your own or with a friend, or family member and have a try.

You feel positive because you are trying to help yourself. You can do as much or as little as you feel able to in the classes because nobody notices as they are all too busy trying to work out how to do the exercises demonstrated on dry land by their teacher!!

If you feel self-conscious, especially if you have psoriasis too, be brave, as you find that most people

that go to the evening ones are going for personal rehabilitation reasons too, whether they have weight problems, getting fit after injury or generally. It may not be as disheartening as you think, but open up a new area of fun. Again most sessions in the evening are single sex sessions.

If you have lost mobility, feel stiff and want to get back into participating in life more, you could always discuss the possibility of having some physio hydrotherapy sessions at your hospital if they have a hydrotherapy pool. Physiotherapists can get you moving again by slowly mobilizing your body in a small warm water pool for a few sessions. Worth discussing with your doctor.



For the more reserved, there is always the possibility of looking into your own hot tub in the garden. They come in all shapes and sizes, with various strengths of massage options. They may be expensive, but if you are in pain, you are considering these as a hydrotherapy benefit and not for pure indulgent pleasure – so don't feel guilty. It never hurts to have a look and enquire about all the options available to you. Why not even try a free wet test from a reputable dealer to see how these can benefit your wellbeing.

Julie Chandler

Swimfit

If you go to the gym you have an instructor setting you a programme, tracking your progress and providing advice. Swimfit offers you the same service for your visits to the pool. If you want to use swimming as a way of improving your fitness, Swimfit will guide you every step of the way.

For just £9.99 a year, Swimfit members of all ages and abilities are enjoying access to these fantastic resources:

- Over 30 easy-to-follow training programmes for swimmers of all abilities
- A personal online logbook, designed to keep track of your progress
- Performance analysis. An interactive facility for members to monitor their overall distances, average speed per stroke and the calories they've burned
- Take on Planet Swimfit. Set yourself a fun challenge by trying to swim the length of the River Nile or from the Earth to the Moon in just two of the many enjoyable endurance tests!

SWIMFIT MEMBERS ALSO

- Receive a free Swimfit cap and goggles*
- Subscribe to Swimming magazine for just £20 a year
- Receive e-mails providing advice on maintaining a healthy lifestyle both in and out of the pool
- Benefit from exclusive discounts on Swimzone training packs developed by double Olympic medallist Nick Gillingham MBE
- Receive a 10% discount on all purchases from the ASA

**Please note that international subscribers are not eligible to receive a free cap and goggles.*

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