

Benefits of Swimming

As we enter the hot summer months, many of us flock to water to cool down. Most of us just dip in the pool for a few minutes, wade around and then hop out. However, have you ever considered actually swimming or performing exercises in the pool? There are numerous health benefits related to exercising in the water. Swimming offers something no other aerobic exercise does: the ability to work your body without harsh impact to your skeletal system. This is extremely important in older individuals as your joints, muscles and bodies begin to age. Water exercise offers you an alternative to pounding the pavement on foot and harsh painful workouts.

5 Healthy Benefits of Swimming:

- 1.) When the human body is submerged in water, it automatically becomes lighter. When immersed to the waist, your body bears just 50 percent of its weight; to the chest and that number reduces to around 25 to 35 percent; with water all the way to the neck, you only have to bear 10 percent of your own weight. The other 90 percent is handled by the pool.
- 2.) Unlike exercise machines in a gym that tend to isolate one body part at a time, swimming puts the body through a broad range of motion that helps joints and ligaments stay loose and flexible.
- 3.) Research shows that aerobic exercise can combat the body's inflammatory response - a key link in the chain that can lead to heart disease. The American Heart Association reports that just 30 minutes of exercise per day, such as swimming, can reduce coronary heart disease in women by 30 to 40 percent.
- 4.) Swimming is now recognized as one of the biggest calorie burners around, and it's great for keeping weight under control. As a general rule, for every 10 minutes of swimming: the breast stroke will burn 60 calories; the backstroke torches 80; the freestyle lights up 100; and the butterfly stroke incinerates an impressive 150.
- 5.) Feel-good chemicals, known as endorphins, are one of swimming's most pleasant side effects making swimmers feel happier and less stressed. In addition to a natural high, swimming can also evoke the relaxation response the same way yoga works on the body. This is due in large part to the constant stretching and relaxing of your muscles combined with deep rhythmic breathing.

Source: Discovery – Fit & Health

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