

# TO YOUR HEALTH

Carleton-Willard Out-Patient Clinic — 100 Old Billerica Road, Bedford MA 01730

Volume 19 Number 1



January 2014

## BENEFITS OF WATER EXERCISING

By Deb McNiven

Oh the weather outside is frightful  
But the CWV pool is so delightful  
And since we have a water class to go  
Let It Snow! Let It Snow! Let It Snow!

January is a month of New Year's Resolutions. Studies show that 40 to 45% of American adults make one or more resolutions each year. If one of your resolutions is to become more active, Carleton-Willard has just the spot for you – Aquatic Exercise.

According to *AARP*, water workouts are appealing to Baby Boomers in growing numbers. More than 10 million people are taking some kind of aquatics class and the number is growing. Swimming is the fourth most popular sports activity in the United States and a good way to get regular aerobic exercise, (*Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2013*). Cardiovascular exercise is important for seniors because it directly reduces the participants' risk for circulatory problems such as heart disease. Water's hydrostatic pressure pushes against your chest and body, lowering the heart rate and helping blood circulate more efficiently. "Water is also more resistant than air, so a 30 minute pool workout is similar to a longer lasting ground-based workout, without the usual impact forces," states Jason Riddell, (Director of Strength and Conditioning), James Madison University.) Residents can exercise longer in water than on land without increased effort or joint and/or muscle pain. The American College of Sports Medicine recommends moderately intense aerobic

exercise for 30 minutes a day, four times a week, plus resistance



strength training, and balance and flexibility training," says Mary E. Sanders, a researcher at the University of Nevada, Reno, and founder of *Golden Waves*, a functional aquatic exercise program for older Americans. "A swimming pool provides the one place where you can do all of that at the same time without the need for a lot of machines—at your own pace and more comfortably."

The repeated impact of your feet landing on the ground places strain on the ankles, knees, hips and back. Water exercise protects those joints. The buoyancy of waist-deep water makes your body weight 50% lighter than your land load, reducing joint impact as you move. For those Residents with arthritis, water exercise improves the use of affected joints without worsening symptoms. The resistance of the water prevents any of the joints from moving too quickly, thereby reducing mild hyperextension and repetitive-stress injuries. The pressure of the water helps move fluid from swollen feet and ankles thereby reducing edema and limited joint movement.

Pool exercise also speeds recovery after knee-replacement surgery. Richard McAvoy, a physical therapist and certified strength and conditioning specialist, presented his research at the 2007 World Aquatic Health Conference on the rehab of 30 patients who had knee replacements. Those patients who combined water-based exercise with land-based exercise recovered faster than those who had only traditional land exercise. The reason: "In the water, you can do multidirectional exercises that you cannot do on land, such as walking backwards at different speeds," explains McAvoy. "When you sit on an exercise machine, you can usually only move one way and in one direction."

Pool time also seems to improve mood and mental health. Jack Raglin, Professor of Kinesiology at Indiana University, states "When you're in warm water, the body heats up more quickly than on dry land, which relaxes muscles and eases tension. It also releases hormones to ease stress and mental fatigue and invigorates the psyche." Some research also suggests that because movement is harder in the water, it may also promote chemical changes in the brain that are important in maintaining thinking and memory, (Raglin, J.S. and Wilson, G.S., "Exercise and It's Side Effects on Mental Health," *Physical Activity and Health*, pp 331-342, 2012).

Each year, more than 1.6 million older U.S. adults go to emergency departments for fall-related injuries. Among older adults, falls are the number one cause of fractures, hospital admissions for trauma, loss of independence, and injury deaths, (*NIH/seniorhealth.gov*). Falling is a major concern for many older adults, owing to a combination of reduced balance, disease, medication side effects, and growing fragility of bones. This can make many exercise options too risky. In the water, your natural buoyancy helps to keep you upright. Even if you do lose your balance completely, you will splash gently into the liquid rather than falling to the floor. When it is cold outside, slip into the Carleton-Willard pool where the temperature always feels like Summer!

### AQUATIC MEMBERSHIPS

Aquatic memberships are split into quarters for a fee of \$87.50 per quarter. Visit the fitness room or call the Fitness Staff at extension 1391. We will be happy to introduce you into the wonderful world of water!



### AQUATIC CLASSES AT CWV

#### Water Works

This class is designed to increase cardiovascular endurance while moving to music. The instructor cues various choreographed sequences to make it fun and challenging.

#### Water Walking

A class taught in the pool that provides a series of walking exercises and routines to target various muscle groups.

#### Aqua Balance and Flexibility

A class taught in the pool that focuses on balance and flexibility through shallow water movements to reduce stress on joints.

#### Open Swim/Walk

This is a time for you to either swim or walk at your own pace. A Lifeguard is on duty at all times.

#### Aquatic Personal Training

One-on-One training with a Personal Trainer. Thirty minutes will be spent addressing your main goals and needs.

### GRIEF WORKSHOP SERIES

Loss of a spouse/partner  
January 24, 2014  
9:00 am—10:00 am

Please join us in the Auditorium for an educational program which explores the impact in the loss of a spouse or partner, as well as ways of coping with such a significant loss.

### HEALTH EDUCATION LECTURE

Please join us on January 29 at 7:15 pm in the Auditorium for the presentation "Hearing, Hearing Loss, and Solutions" with Dr. Kenneth Grundfast, Chief of the Department of Otolaryngology at Boston Medical Center, and Professor and Chairman of Otolaryngology at Boston University School of Medicine. This presentation is part of the Health Lecture Series, and will serve as the "kick off" meeting for the new educational support group for residents with Hearing Impairment.