

Healthy Heart™

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Swimming

A Full Body Workout

All physical activity improves your cardiovascular condition. Swimming is a great low-level intensity aerobic exercise that offers a wide array of health benefits. Whether it is distance swimming or doing laps in a pool, this activity keeps the heart rate up and builds endurance, while it tones the muscles – a great overall workout.

Every time a deep breath is taken, the lungs expand and push oxygenated blood into the arteries. This process, combined with the continual full body movement required for swimming, helps the heart move more blood more efficiently. The end result is a removal of some of the blood based toxins, known to induce heart disease.

The Harvard Health Publications provide further support for swimming through one of their studies that compared the blood pressure, cholesterol levels, maximum energy output, and other measures of cardiovascular health across nearly 46,000 male and female walkers, runners, swimmers, and non-exercisers. The findings show that swimmers and runners had the best results, a bit ahead of walkers.

Swimming also helps to increase muscle tone and

flexibility. Unlike a high-impact exercise, such as running, swimming is easy on the joints and doesn't over exert a single body part because the water cushions the body from any harsh impact.

At the same time, swimming requires the usage of almost all the body's muscles to move against the resistance of the water. Swimming is said to be the most beneficial for people with arthritis and those who are undergoing cardiac rehabilitation because it provides a light workout against the soft resistance of the water without taking a toll on their joints.

