The Coolest Workout

If you are finding your regular exercise routine a bit too hard on the joints and need a cool alternative for the summer months, consider a dip in the pool. Pool exercise increases circulation, offers gentle resistance to help build muscle, is easy on joints, and the buoyancy of the water helps relieve arthritic pain.

Weightless — The buoyancy of water is amazing. It reduces your body's weight by nearly 90 percent. This lessens the weight bearing stress on joints often experienced during other land exercises. In addition, pool exercise combines every aspect of fitness—cardio, respiratory, flexibility, and muscular strength and endurance.

Swim, Run or Walk — Doing laps is a great way to increase your cardiovascular fitness. If you are not as strong a swimmer as your other pool friends, running or even walking in the pool can be just as effective. This is also a good way to warm-up.

Stretch & Resist — Just about any of the resistance and stretching exercises you do on land can be adapted for the water. Exercises like jumping jacks and marching can be even more effective under water because you get the benefit of water resistance at the same time as enjoying the cardio benefit. You might want to visit your local sporting goods or pool store to check out the wide variety of aerobic and aqua fitness equipment to enhance your workout.

Safety First — If you are not the best swimmer or have arthritis, take a buddy or exercise with a group. You may need assistance getting out of the pool. Also, consult with your doctor before starting your water exercise program, especially if you have any special medical conditions.

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