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Pool dance

Dive into the pool this summer and emerge a Greek god with aqua aerobics. Fitness instructor Nawaz Modi Singhania tells **Anju Maskeri** about the long-term health benefits of aqua aerobics, why the workout should be your new best friend this season and more > Page 36



Nawaz Modi Singhania demonstrates exercises using aqua bells. PIC/BIPIN KOKATE

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Nawaz Modi Singhania demonstrates cardio exercises to her students at Body Art, Marine Drive. PICS/BIPIN KOKATE

MAKE A SPLASH

Is the oppressive heat coming in the way of your exercise routine? Then, it's time to plunge into the pool. Aqua aerobics is the fun way to lose weight without breaking into a sweat. Anju Maskeri attends fitness expert Nawaz Modi Singhania's class to know more

WITH some cool music playing in the background, Nawaz Modi Singhania's aqua aerobics class is all about making a splash in the pool — but the fit way. An ideal summer workout, aqua aerobics is normally done in a shallow pool. So, even if you do not know how to swim, you can still do the exercise. Modi prefers to instruct her students from the edge of the pool so that each step is clearly visible. An hourlong, the session is peppered with cardio exercises followed by dance moves using props such as aqua bells and aqua noodles. Excerpts from an interview:

Q. What is aqua aerobics?

A. Aqua aerobics is an effective cardio activity involving a pool full of people working out to fun choreography and peppy music. Equipment such as aquabells, aqua noodles, aqua gloves and aqua balls are used during workout. The added resistance of the water is used to challenge the body and muscular structures for greater benefit.

Q. How did you find out about it and how long have you been an instructor?

A. It's one of the many international and local routines that Body Art offers. We have had this aqua aerobics unit for about

nine years now.

Q. What are the benefits of it?

A. Benefits include fat, inch and weight loss, a healthy back, strength, stamina, a full-body workout, rehabilitation (knees, neck, spine, ankles, hips), flexibility, improved balance, posture and coordination.

Q. Does it have an impact on mental health?

A. Absolutely. Aqua aerobics is a powerful anti-depressant. Endorphins, the 'happy' hormones or the 'feel-good' hormones are released during this routine. This makes one positive, upbeat and cheerful. Aqua aerobics is a huge stress buster. As you get slimmer, more toned and fitter, your self-esteem and self-confidence will get a major boost. You'll also sleep more soundly at night.

Q. If compared to other forms of exercises like hitting the gym, zumba, where does aqua aerobics stand?

A. The key to success in any exercise whether it is zumba, yoga or aerobics lies in cross-training. Although your workout routine whatever it may be might be highly effective, the problem is that it's not going to stay that way for long. The body gets used

to, and then immune to the additional stresses and strains of your workout. In order to see regular results, it is important to continuously challenge the body differently. One can take on all sorts of activities such as aqua aerobics, walking, swimming, aerobics, rope jumping/skipping, weight/resistance training, ski-ing, mountaineering, racket games, yoga, roller blading, skating, jogging, cycling, and so on. Both aerobic and anaerobic activities should be included.

Q. What is the best time to do this exercise?

A. There really is no such thing as the 'best time' to do your aqua aerobics workout. Many people prefer to finish their aqua aerobics class off in the morning as they feel that distractions are at a minimum. Others prefer to make it a part of their routine to get their workout in at the end of the day on their way home from work. They feel this also helps them unwind. So, it really depends on your lifestyle. Some feel that around 5 - 5.30 pm is ideal as an individual's metabolism is at its peak at that time, but there is no conclusive evidence to support this as yet.

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Squats help tighten the gluteal muscles



Aqua noodles targets all four sets of abdominal muscles



Upper body workout using aqua bells