

Aerobics, weights make fluid transition into pool workouts - Hawaii News - Honolulu Star-Advertiser

StarAdvertiser.com

Aerobics, weights make fluid transition into pool workouts

By Nancy Arcayna

POSTED: 1:30 a.m. HST, Aug 4, 2015

LAST UPDATED: 4:23 p.m. HST, Aug 4, 2015

Working out may have fallen by the wayside during the recent heat wave where it was 90 degrees in the shade, but aqua aerobics may be the answer to getting back on track.

At the Leeward YMCA pool in Waipahu, which is between 3 and 5 feet deep, knowing how to swim is not a requirement to join the water aerobics classes. As long as you're comfortable in water and can touch the bottom, you can do the exercises.

Instructor Jocelyn Roberts stays out of the pool so she can clearly be seen demonstrating the moves. "Everyone goes at their own pace," she said. "We have all ages in the class. Some people are recovering from injuries or have diabetes and other conditions. It's one of the best exercises for challenging obesity."

Most of the participants are regulars who go at least every other day, Roberts said. "The older adults that may have trouble walking on land move gracefully in the water," she said. "Their stance is stronger. They can lift their knees higher. It's easier for them to work on their posture."

Fitness has long been a constant in Roberts' life. The 41-year-old Ewa Beach resident was a swim instructor and taught a variety of fitness classes before she decifocused on water aerobics. She also runs a kempo karate school for youths.

H2O AEROBICS

» **Where:** Leeward YMCA, 94-440 Mokuola St., Waipahu

» **When:** 8-9 a.m. Tuesdays and Saturdays; 9-10 a.m. Mondays and Wednesdays; 5:15-6:15 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays; and 5:30-6:30 p.m. Tuesdays

» **Cost:** Adult monthly membership rates start at \$53; senior and family plans are available.

» **Info:** Call 671-6495. For aqua classes held at other YMCA locations, visit www.ymcahonolulu.org/schedules.

"People need to find exercise that they love and try what fits them best," she said. "I've been teaching for five years, and some of these ladies have been coming longer than that because they love it."

SETTING

Classes are held in an outdoor, 25-yard pool at the Leeward YMCA. Participants exercise and socialize at the same time. Things to bring: swim attire, a towel, sunscreen and a hat. Lifeguards are on duty.

BENEFITS

Being in the water provides resistance without putting impact on the joints. The class offers a cardio and strength workout. It also works on posture and flexibility. And even though you're not sweating because you're in the water, it's an effective total body workout.

THE WORKOUT

The class is done in chest-deep water, and your head never goes underwater.

The workout comes from water resistance. Foam dumbbells were used to do biceps curls and other arm, chest and shoulder exercises. Using the dumbbells underwater is equivalent to weight training on land, according to Roberts. Holding them underwater is equivalent to 10-pound weights. We also used foam noodles underwater to create the movement of lifting a barbell and sat on a noodle to provide floatation while doing a combination of leg and arm exercises.

USER REVIEW

Thelma Higa, an 88-year-old Pearl City resident, dons a big floppy hat and sunglasses when she works out. Although it's hard for her to walk long distances, she can exercise for an hour during the water aerobics class. She's been taking classes for five years, averaging five classes a week. "My doctor suggested water exercise and I've been going faithfully," she said. It's made a positive difference in her range of movement, she said.

"In the water there's no impact when you're bouncing up and down. I have no pain," she said. "I try to get people to go, but they say they are shame. I told them we're not there for a beauty contest. And after we shower, we share snacks and socialize."

Ewa resident Sandi Scott, 64, said she can't believe she waited a couple of years before deciding to try the class. "Once I started going, I was hooked," she said. She was diagnosed with arthritis and her doctor suggested water exercise. Scott tries to go to five water aerobics classes each week, and on the remaining two days she does her own workout in the pool. "It takes a lot more stamina than people realize," she said. "I may not be able to do anything on land, but in the water I'm like Wonder Woman."

TRY IT OUT?

The class is perfect for anyone who is recovering from an injury or for seniors and others seeking a good workout but don't want their joints to take a beating.

"Tryouts" features exercise and wellness classes and other fitness activities. Reach Nancy Arcayna at narcayna@staradvertiser.com or call 529-4808.