

Get Your Feet Wet at DC Ranch Village Health Club

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Thursday, 23 August 2012 11:36 - Last Updated Thursday, 23 August 2012 11:43

Josh Tayrien, head swim coach at DC Ranch Village Health Club, discusses the benefits of swimming, how to get started and how to improve your stroke.



There must be something in the water in Arizona. The state sent about 80 swimmers to the 2012 Olympic trials—one of the top states to send such an impressive number. Misty Hyman, a former Olympic swimmer, was recently inducted into the Arizona Sports Hall of Fame and now coaches for Shadow Mountain High School. Nothing makes swim coaches happier than seeing new swimmers—no matter what age—getting into the pool. So jump in and enjoy the benefits of this fun and beneficial exercise. Here's how to start:

The very first thing—and possibly the hardest thing—to do in the beginning is relax. You can't swim with flexed muscles and a tight body, so take it easy and get used to just being in the water. Secondly, a new swimmer should focus on their head position. The head position needs to be low on the surface of the water, which makes it necessary to breathe to the side—instead of looking up—to keep the body on the surface of the water. You have to learn how to breathe effectively in swimming before you can make real progress. Lastly, a consistent kick is important. A small, quick, repetitive kick keeps your rhythm and balance, keeping you on top of the water.

Another vital step for beginning swimmers is to find a trainer to properly teach swim technique and the basics. If someone starts swimming before learning proper technique, they are at risk for a serious injury. A swim coach will provide pointers on how to improve your stroke as well as suggest drills to help you get stronger. This will improve your speed and efficiency in the water.

For more seasoned swimmers, keep your routine fresh by changing your stroke and speed. If you always swim the breast stroke, try adding freestyle to your routine and swimming your existing stroke faster. For example, swim five laps of your normal stroke at a faster speed, then switch to the new stroke for five laps and repeat. This will work different muscle groups and prevent your workout from getting stale. When attempting a new stroke, have your swim coach check your technique and breathing if you are unsure how to do the new stroke properly.

Another great refresher is to participate in races. Having a set goal will keep you motivated and on task. Look for relays in your area and find a partner to do the race with you. This will add camaraderie and fun to your workout.

TO LEARN MORE:

Village Health Clubs and Spas www.villageclubs.com.

Water Workout

Apart from toning arms and legs, swimming is an amazing all-around exercise for a number of reasons:

- 1) It is an aerobic exercise that helps build the lungs and lean muscle.
- 2) It is not a weight-bearing exercise, so there is no stress on joints and bones.
- 3) It is a great way to lose weight.