

Occasionally, though, a female is hired to administer an athletics program that competes at the highest collegiate level. Thus, a major issue confronting athletic programs is the need for more qualified female coaches and sport administrators.

Although there is a rise and surge in the participation by women in sports, a large disparity still remains. These disparities are prevalent globally and continue to hinder equality in sports. Many institutions and programs still remain conservative and do not contribute to gender equity in sports [1].

Today, city recreation programs and private clubs are trying to attract more women, and the emphasis on fitness stimulates greater acceptance of women who not only look and dress fit, but are fit. Myths die slowly, and prejudicial attitudes are even more resistant to change.

### References:

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## **TO SWIM OR NOT TO SWIM: THE RISKS AND BENEFITS FOR HUMAN HEALTH**

Prehistoric man learnt to swim in order to cross rivers and lakes. Cave paintings from the Stone Age depicting swimmers have been found in «the cave of swimmers» in the southwestern part of Egypt around 10000 years ago [1]. Swimming was also referred to in Greek mythology. Written references of recreational swimming date from 2000 BC, with some of the earliest references to swimming including the Iliad, the Odyssey, the Bible and others.

Swimming emerged as a competitive recreational activity in the 1830s in England. In 1828, the first indoor swimming pool was opened to the public. Swimming was not widely practised until the early 19th century, when the National Swimming Society of Great Britain began to hold competitions in six artificial swimming pools built around London. The recreational activity grew in popularity and in 1880 the first national governing body, the Amateur Swimming Association, was formed [2].

Nowadays, swimming is widely used for various purposes, such as rescue purposes, marine biology, military purposes etc. But the greatest influence on human health are supposed to have the following: competitive swimming, recreational swimming and swimming for exercise.

Swimming in competition should create the least resistance in order to obtain maximum speed. The goal of competitive swimming is to be the fastest to swim a given distance. There are forty officially recognized individual swimming events in the pool; however the International Olympic Committee only recognizes 32 of them. In open water swimming the events are swum in the open water of lake or sea. Open-water competitions are typically separate to other swimming competitions with the exception of the World Championships and the Olympics. The international governing body for competitive swimming is the Fédération Internationale de Natation («International Swimming Federation»), better known as FINA.

The four competitive strokes are the butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and freestyle (frontcrawl). Only one of these styles may be used in competition. Most early swimmers used the breaststroke, or a form of it. The front crawl or freestyle, then called the *trudgen* was introduced later by John Trudgen, copying it from Native Americans. Backstroke was included as an Olympic Event in the next century. Butterfly stroke was first a variant of Breaststroke, until it was accepted as a separate style in 1952. The most drastic change in swimming has been the addition of the underwater dolphin kick, which is used to maximize the speed at the start and after the turns in all styles.

The most common purpose for swimming is recreation. Recreational swimming is considered by many a good way to relax, as well as providing a good full-body workout. Several swimming styles are suitable for recreational swimming; most recreational swimmers prefer a style that keeps their head out of the water and with an underwater arm recovery. Breaststroke, side stroke, and 'dog paddle', are the most common strokes utilized in recreational swimming, but the out-of-water arm recovery of freestyle or butterfly gives rise to better exploitation of the difference in resistance between air and water.

Butterfly stroke, which consists of out-of-water recovery with even symmetry in body movements, is most suited to rough water swimming. Most recreational swimming takes place in pools, where the water is calm. Therefore freestyle, which does not work as well in rough water, is suitable. Venues for recreational swimming are swimming pools, beaches, lakes, swimming holes, creeks, rivers, and sometimes canals.

Swimming is an excellent form of exercise. Because the density of the human body is approximately similar to that of water, the body is supported by the water and less stress is therefore placed on joints and bones. Therefore, swimming is frequently used as an exercise in rehabilitation after injuries or for those with disabilities.

Resistance swimming is one form of swimming exercise. It is done either for training purposes, to hold the swimmer in place for stroke analysis, or to enable swimming in a confined space for athletic or therapeutic reasons. Resistance swimming can be done either against a stream of moving water or by holding the swimmer stationary with elastic attachments.

Swimming is primarily an aerobic exercise due to the long exercise time, requiring a constant oxygen supply to the muscles, except for short sprints where the muscles work anaerobically. As with most aerobic exercise it is believed to reduce the harmful effects of stress.

Swimming is a healthy workout that can be done for a lifetime. It is a low-impact activity that has several mental and bodily health benefits, that is a recreational motion for everyone. Swimming can provide a low-impact workout. It builds endurance, muscle strength, and cardiovascular fitness. Two and a half hours per week of aerobic physical activity such as swimming can decrease the risk of chronic illnesses. Along with this, swimming is linked to better cognitive function, lower risk of type 2 diabetes, lower risk of high blood pressure, and lower risk of stroke. People are typically able to exercise longer in water than on land without increased effort, and minimal joint or muscle pain.

Swimming is a healthy activity and enjoys a low risk of injury compared with many other sports. Nevertheless there are some health risks with swimming, including the following:

- drowning or inhalation of water;
- exposure to chemicals, like disinfectant chlorine;
- infection by bacteria, parasites and viruses, living in water;
- exhaustion caused by currents, tides and waves;
- hypothermia, due to cold water;
- stepping on sharp objects such as broken glass;
- stings from jellyfish or bites from sharks and other fish;
- collision with another swimmer.

To sum up it is necessary to emphasize that swimming is a good way to get fit and stay so for as long as you wish. The good thing about it is that you do not have to go to the same place every day as in the case of gym workouts. As far as a swimmer is concerned, he can swim pretty much everywhere, as long as there is clean water and the necessary safety measures taken [3].

Swimming is a recreational activity that anyone can enjoy, regardless of age. From young to old, everyone can take full advantage of this great way to get in shape and maintain a fit body for all of one's life.

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