

# Leader TOOLS

Keeping participants focused  
on positive lifestyle choices

4th Quarter 2019 October - November - December



## Observances & Resources

**OCTOBER** is well-known as Breast Cancer Awareness Month. But did you know that for over 25 years, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has offered the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program. This program provides low-income, uninsured, and underserved women access to screening and diagnostic services.

You can  
find out  
more  
here

Some breast cancer risk factors cannot be changed, such as getting older (most breast cancers are detected after the age of 50). However, other factors can be altered, such as remaining physically active (woman who are not physically active have a higher risk).

Although breast cancer mainly affects women, men can get it too. About 1 percent of all breast cancers occur in men, with about 2000 diagnosed each year.

**NATIONAL FAMILY WEEK** originated in Canada, and is now recognized in the US, UK and Australia as well. The goal is to celebrate family life and encourage families to spend more time together while also highlighting the important role families play in society. In the US, this takes place the week of American Thanksgiving, November 24-30, 2019.

You may have participants who do not have strong family ties or have family members living close by, so this is the perfect opportunity to recognize the “fitness family” developed within your classes. You could also “share the love” by inviting a group of children or teens (church youth group, homeschool group, brownies/girl scouts, cub scouts/boy scouts, etc.) to join your class for a day.

**DECEMBER** celebrates many different religious holidays, all of which focus on peace, love, and goodwill, making this the perfect month to uplift and encourage others. Recognize your class participants for the accomplishments they have achieved through exercise. Provide an opportunity for each person to share his/her exercise success (less pain, improved range of motion, stronger muscles, more endurance, etc.). Offer a free class (or even a week of classes) to encourage new participants to experience the joy of movement. Do something fun to celebrate the season – for example, Carol Carson’s idea on page 6!



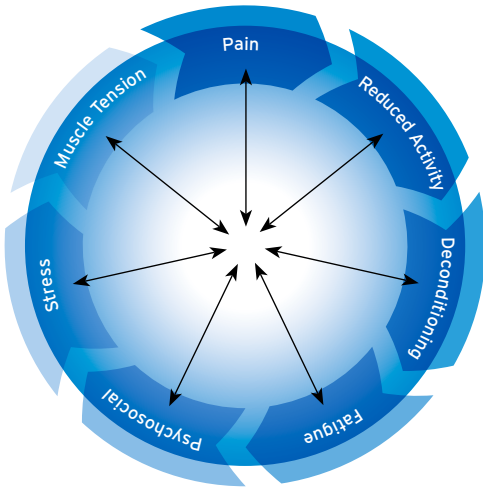
Resource provided by the  
Aquatic Exercise Association

[www.aeawave.com](http://www.aeawave.com)

912-289-3559

# ARTHRITIS & PAIN

September, recognized as Pain Awareness Month, provided an opportunity for the Arthritis Foundation to share a wealth of information on the topic of pain.



The article, Understanding Chronic Pain, explains how long-lasting pain can affect all aspects of life. People with arthritis can have both acute and chronic pain. Acute pain associated with an active injury may last for days or weeks until the injury is healed. Chronic pain is defined as pain that persists for three months or longer. For example, a flaring hip joint can cause acute pain, but the individual

may experience pain, fatigue and/or low function for months or years afterwards. Chronic pain can limit one's abilities in all aspects of life – from work to play to sleep. Additionally, pain is interconnected with other factors; difficulty with one can negatively impact all the others. Your AEA Arthritis Foundation Program Leader Manual explains the relationship between the physical, psychosocial and social symptoms of arthritis on pages 19-20.

*45 Ways to Tame Your Pain* is a free, downloadable booklet available at [www.arthritis.org](http://www.arthritis.org) from the experts at the Arthritis Foundation. These tips fall into various categories: Quick Fixes, Moving More, Stress Soothers, Mental Health, Sleep, Medical Procedures, Nutrition, and CBD & Medical Marijuana. Under Moving More, you will

find six tips and also learn that regular physical activity can reduce pain and improve daily function by about 40%. This should encourage individuals to begin – or continue – your AFAP and AFEP classes!

Keep in mind that arthritis and associated pain affects children as well as adults. The website shares a very detailed article, *Treating Pain in Children with Juvenile Arthritis*. From this article you will also find many associated links to help you better understand JA, for your personal or professional needs.



Individuals living with arthritis have the opportunity to join thousands of others who are already making a difference in the future of arthritis. Suggest that your class participants provide information that will help learn about treatments and resources to live their best life by participating in the Live Yes! Insights assessment.

Individuals with arthritis are encouraged to take part in this initiative by the Arthritis Foundation that collects patient reported outcomes through brief, monthly surveys. The purpose is to provide individuals with a way to track their personal experiences and to assist the Foundation in creating a learning health system for adult rheumatology in the US. Look for more information on Live Yes! Insights in future Leader Tools.

Provide your Insights here



Resource provided by the Aquatic Exercise Association

[www.aeawave.com](http://www.aeawave.com)

912-289-3559

# OSTEOPOROSIS & EXERCISE

Excerpt from:

*Osteoporosis: Successful Aquatic  
Exercise Options*

By Lori Sherlock, EdD

AEA Aquatic Training Specialist  
& Program Leader Trainer

Osteoporosis literally translates to “porous bone.” This can be due to the body losing too much or making too little bone resulting in weak bones that are susceptible to fractures. Because bone is a dynamic, living tissue, the body continually breaks down old bone and replaces it with new. As individuals age, the ability to keep up with this replacement process declines and we can begin to see a decrease in bone mass. Outside of progressing age, there are a myriad of conditions that can lead to the onset of osteoporosis. From autoimmune diseases to gastrointestinal disorders, millions of people, both men and women are at risk for developing osteoporosis.

Much of the exercise focus for those with osteoporosis involves three primary goals aimed at reducing the risk for fractures while promoting the maintenance of bone integrity:

- 1 Weight bearing exercise
- 2 Building strength
- 3 Fall prevention

Land-based training is best for weight bearing exercise and building bone health but what happens when people cannot participate in land-based training due to functional limitations, pain, or fear? The water may not be as effective at loading the bone; however, it is a perfect environment for building strength and working on fall prevention strategies. The aquatic environment can aid in these three areas while providing a safe, supportive exercise environment.

The National Osteoporosis Foundation prioritizes four exercise areas: Posture, Hip and Back Strength, Balance, and Functional Exercises.

## Posture Exercises

All exercises should put posture on a pedestal. It is the first thing that instructors should provide corrective feedback for and the one variable that can be highlighted no matter what exercise is being performed.

## Hips and Back Strength

These areas are of great importance due to the risk for fracture. By building strength in the hips and back, the prevalence of fracture risk diminishes.

## Balance Exercises

Balance is one of the most emphasized areas for individuals with osteoporosis because falls commonly result in a fracture. It is for this reason that fear of falling increases with a diagnosis of osteoporosis and this influences exercise behavior. If individuals have an increased fear of falling, they commonly are not willing to perform exercises that challenge balance.

## Functional Exercise

Functional exercises use the biomechanics of daily tasks paired with additional stimulus (such as resistance) to enhance the body's ability to perform everyday activities. Every population can benefit from including functional training into their routines.

Though aquatic exercise can do so much for those with osteoporosis, it is important to remember that weight bearing exercise is still paramount and thus, aquatic programming should be paired with land-based training to mitigate bone loss.

To learn more, read the full article, *Osteoporosis: Successful Aquatic Exercise Options*, in the June/July 2019 issue of *Akwa* magazine found at the members area of AEA's website. Not already an AEA Member?

**Click here & join now to have access to all the benefits, including access to *Akwa* magazine!**



Resource provided by the  
Aquatic Exercise Association

[www.aeawave.com](http://www.aeawave.com)

912-289-3559

# STAYING FLEXIBLE FOR LIFE

By Julie See, AEA Director of Education

Range of motion (ROM) is the full movement potential of a joint. Each joint in the body has a specific range of motion. Flexibility is the ability to move a joint through its full ROM. Stretching is a key activity to develop and maintain flexibility. Stretching exercises will lengthen and lubricate muscles and connective tissue, as well as maintain or improve flexibility and mobility.

Stretching is important to healthy lifestyles and influences our ability to perform activities of daily living. Individuals with arthritis should try to move each joint through its complete pain-free range of motion daily to prevent stiffness, loss of motion and deformity. Joint inflammation or damage, such as that caused by various forms of arthritis, may reduce mobility. Because of this limited range of motion, the tendons, muscles and ligaments may become shortened. This, in turn, may cause pain with movement, particularly at the end range of the joint movement. This decrease in mobility may make functional activities more difficult, or even impossible, to perform.

## Stretching Benefits

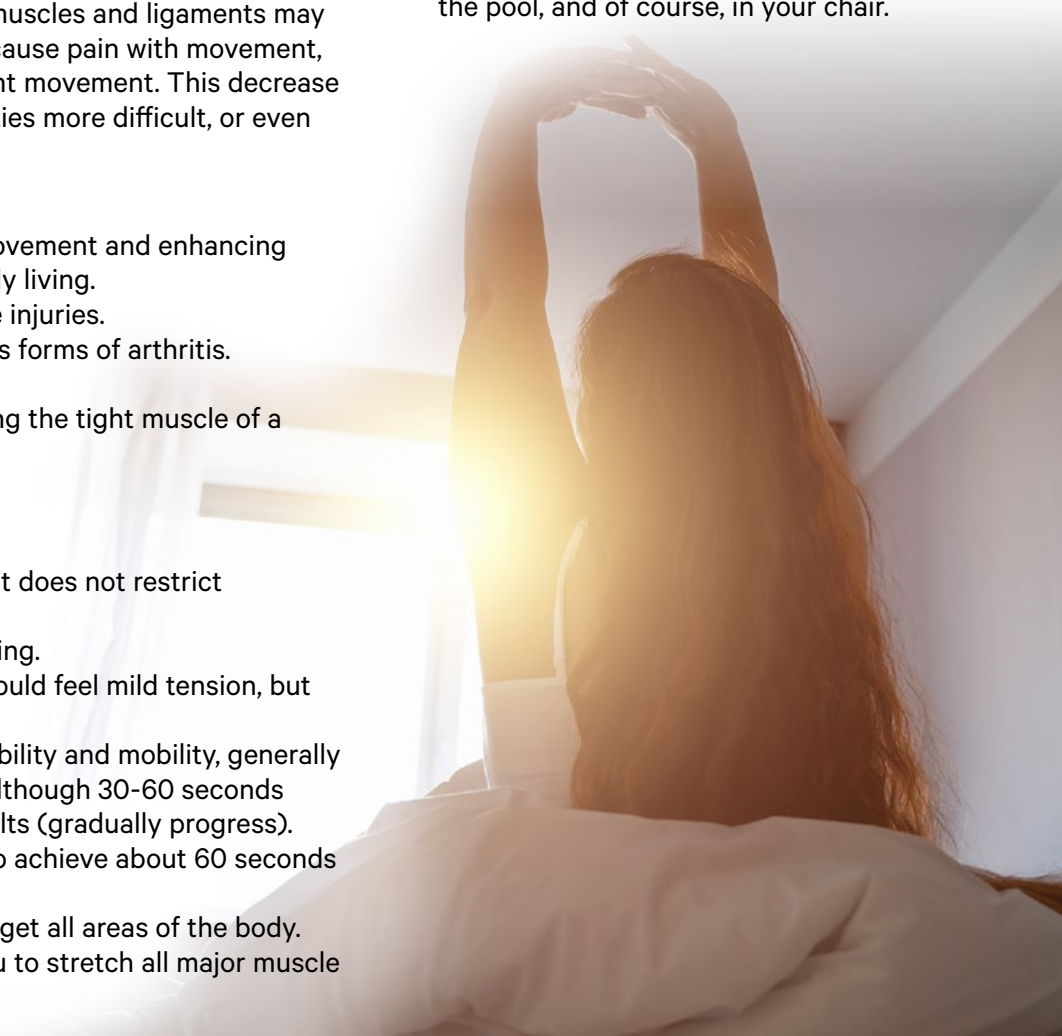
- Assist in maintaining normal joint movement and enhancing mobility required for activities of daily living.
- Helps to reduce stiffness and reduce injuries.
- Help reduce the symptoms of various forms of arthritis.
- Increases blood flow to the muscles.
- Improves posture (focus on stretching the tight muscle of a muscle pair).
- Relieves stress.

## Stretching Tips

- Wear loose, comfortable clothing that does not restrict movement.
- Warm up the muscles before stretching.
- Move slowly into the stretch. You should feel mild tension, but not pain.
- For static stretching to improve flexibility and mobility, generally hold the stretch for 10-30 seconds although 30-60 seconds may be more beneficial for older adults (gradually progress). Relax; repeat the stretch 2-4 times to achieve about 60 seconds of stretching per muscle group.
- Be sure to stretch both sides and target all areas of the body. 8-10 stretches will typically allow you to stretch all major muscle groups.

- Keep breathing throughout the stretch. Avoid holding your breath.
- Make the movements smooth, controlled and pain-free. Avoid bouncing which may cause injury.
- Stretch at least twice a week, but daily stretching is beneficial especially for individuals with arthritis and related conditions.

Surprise! You can stretch almost anywhere – in your bed before you get up in the morning, standing (use the wall, sturdy chair, table, etc. as needed for balance), lying on the floor, in the pool, and of course, in your chair.



Resource provided by the  
Aquatic Exercise Association

[www.aeawave.com](http://www.aeawave.com)

912-289-3559

# ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

Reprinted with permission from: FEOAA News, Volume 13, Issue 1

By Missy Von Luehrte, RN - El Camino Hospital, Mountain View, California / Better Breathers Program

When you focus on gratitude and other positive emotions, you feel better and are more relaxed, more creative, and more productive. You also have a positive influence on those around you. Here are a few things you can do to cultivate an “attitude of gratitude” in the coming year:

- **THINK ABOUT YOUR BLESSINGS DAILY.** Aging and declining health are challenging. The key to a positive attitude is to develop a habit of focusing on things you are grateful for. Put a note on your bath- room mirror or carry a card in your wallet or purse with the message, “Count Your Blessings.” Set aside time each day to reflect on how fortunate you are.
- **VERBALIZE YOUR GRATITUDE.** During conversations with friends and at home, express your appreciation for all of the wonderful things and people in your life. Express your gratitude to supportive friends and family members.
- **SHIFT THE FOCUS AWAY FROM DIFFICULTIES.** When problems arise and you’ve done all you can to remedy them, train your mind to bring your attention back to your blessings. This helps you to keep things in perspective. Recognize that your health and basic necessities in life are more important than the fact that the house is not as clean as you would like.

Besides, when you are relaxed and experiencing positive emotions, you stand a far better chance of coming up with the energy to take on more.

- **LIFT OTHERS IN NEED.** One of the best ways to use your gifts (sense of humor, positive attitude, etc.) is to share them with others who are having a rough time. Can you lend a helping hand to a friend, relative, or other person in your community? Merely calling someone in need and giving a few words of encouragement can make a tremendous difference to that person.

It costs you nothing to be grateful and appreciative, yet it has a considerable impact on the quality of your life. So, don’t waste another minute. Reflect on the priceless gifts you have enjoyed and start sharing your gratitude with others.



Resource provided by the  
Aquatic Exercise Association

[www.aeawave.com](http://www.aeawave.com)

912-289-3559



# LAUGHTER YO-HO-HO-HO-GA

*Submitted by Carol Carson  
AEA Certified Member and AFAP/AFEP Program Leader*

Looking for some holiday fun? You may have heard of Laughter Yoga. This is based on the premise that the body gains the same physiological (reduce blood pressure and levels of stress hormones) and psychological benefits from laughing, whether that laughter is real or fake. We took this one step further in our class last holiday season with Laughter Yo-Ho-Ho-Ho-Ga. In addition to wearing fun and funny holiday attire, I told a joke and participants were instructed to laugh at the joke, not matter how bad it was. The catch was, their laugh had to be a “Ho-Ho-Ho” and they had to keep laughing until I said stop. Invariably, this fake laughing resulted in everyone really laughing.

---

Under Articles & More you will find **Fitness Pro** (educational articles for fitness professionals), **Better Health** (informative articles for exercise enthusiasts), and **Resources**. Click on Resources to access promos that you can personalize for your classes, Participant Release Forms and Attendance Logs, Lesson Plan Development Tool (to help you design your classes), plus two participant handouts: Ten Tips for Safe & Effective Exercise and a Physical Activity Agreement. **Be sure to take advantage of these free resources and visit the website often for new information to grow your classes and your career.**

## MORE RESOURCES

In addition to our quarterly Leader Tools, AEA makes available other resources at our website.

[AEA RESOURCES AND TOOLS](#)



Resource provided by the  
Aquatic Exercise Association

[www.aeawave.com](http://www.aeawave.com)

912-289-3559