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100% Effective Natural Hormone Treatment
Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!

Resources for Wheelchair Exercisers

By Jon Gestl

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Ask most people of the challenges they face following through with an exercise program and you're likely to hear the common complaints: Lack of motivation, being too tired, not having enough time, too busy. Or as someone recently told me, "My get up and go has gotten up and gone".

But imagine having the unique challenge of not being able to, literally, "get up and go". This is the unique challenge of the more than 56 million disabled individuals in the U.S. alone, many who are wheelchair users.

For many involved in the mainstream fitness industry, the term "wheelchair exerciser" may conjure up images of someone in a physical therapy setting in the process of rehabilitation from injury or disability. But consider the wheelchair user who wants to participate in regular exercise for weight loss or muscle gain. Or those with the burning desire to compete in a favorite sport. What services meet their unique challenges?

Fortunately, there are many options that those in wheelchairs have in pursuing fitness goals:

Access to facilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act signed in 1990 helped increase the availability of wheelchair-accessible facilities, including health clubs. As more and more private health clubs follow suit, individuals who use wheelchairs will have increasing options.

However, access alone does not ensure that wheelchair exercisers will have the appropriate equipment to meet their strength training and cardiovascular needs. It's easy enough to modify certain upper-body exercises with dumbbells and resistance bands for a seated exercise, but most machines simply will not accommodate a wheelchair. Effective aerobic training can be even harder to accomplish, since most cardiovascular machines require use of the legs to raise the heart rate.

Adaptive Exercise Machines

Resources for Wheelchair Exercisers

Fortunately, there is a large number of adaptable exercise machines available to the exerciser and to health clubs that choose to offer adaptive exercise options:

The Endorphin Corporation

<http://www.endorphin.net/>

Manufacturer of wheelchair accessible fitness machines for both cardiovascular and strength conditioning, including the hand cycle and tabletop bike.

Access To Recreation

<http://www.endorphin.net/>

Exercise equipment and recreational products for the wheelchair-bound such as all terrain wheelchairs,

pool lifts and more.

Spinlife

<http://www.spinlife.com/>

Sells wheelchairs of all types. Contains resource section.

Adaptive Fitness Personal Trainers

Finally recognizing the need for fitness professionals to be knowledgeable about the needs of wheelchair exercisers, a number of personal trainer organizations offer specialized certifications and/or programs in Adaptive Fitness. This is good news for those who desire professional instruction by a trainer who is knowledgeable of special needs. The following are a few organizations that offer either certification program in Adaptive Fitness or specialized education:

International Sports Sciences Association (ISSA)/Specialist in Adaptive Fitness

<http://www.issaonline.com/courses/saf.cfm>

American Association for Active Lifestyles & Fitness

http://www.aahperd.org/aaalf_emplate.cfm?template=adaptedaquatics.html

Exercise videos, TV Programs and Manuals

Some may feel more comfortable working out in the privacy of their own home rather than travelling to the gym. For those searching for in-home instruction, resources such as exercise videos, TV programs and printed instruction manuals can help the wheelchair user increase activity levels, lose fat and gain muscle mass:

Armchair Fitness

<http://www.armchairfitness.com/>

Classic armchair exercises developed by fitness expert Betty Switkes. Includes videotapes for aerobic, strength, yoga, and "gentle" formats.

Maria Serrao's Workout Tapes

Resources for Wheelchair Exercisers

http://www.dropbears.com/amazon_emplate_movies_ype_browse/mode_290298

Actress and model Maria Serrao, in a wheelchair since the age of 5, stars in a series of exercise videotapes including: Everyone Can Exercise–Cardio Challenge, Toning & Strengthening, Real Life Fitness–Body Sculpting, Real Life Fitness– Fat Burning.

Sit and Be Fit with Mary Ann Wilson

<http://www.sitandbefit.com/>

Seated exercise videos for older adults and/or physically limited individuals. Sit and Be Fit is also a cable TV series; the broadcast schedule is listed on the website.

Paul Gaudino's Family Fitness Show

<http://www.exerciseman.com/>

Cable TV exercise show that features exercises for the disabled, wheelchair bound, seniors, people with back pain, and beginners. Exercise videotapes are available through his website.

Creative Chair Exercises

<http://www.tudefitness.com/wheelchairexercisead.htm>

A Seated Exercise manual by Bob Blick, including both aerobic and strength formats.

The Thrill of Victory...

Wheelchair Sports and Competition

Numerous and exciting options exist for individuals in wheelchairs who desire to quench the burning desire of sport and competition...

International Paralympic Committee

<http://www.paralympic.org/>

The Paralympic Games are the Olympic equivalent competitions for individuals with disabilities and are recognized by the International Olympic Committee. The IPC organizes the Paralympic Games along with other multi–disability competitions, from regional to world championships, with the highest achieving athletes in each sport qualifying for the Paralympics. IPC's vision: "To enable paralympic athletes to achieve sporting excellence and inspire and excite the world." Inspire, indeed! The next time you'd rather skip a workout, surf over to this site and be inspired by these athletes. A truly amazing organization.

Disabled Sports USA

<http://www.dsusa.org/>

A non–profit organization established in 1967 by disabled Vietnam veterans, DS/USA offers nationwide sports rehabilitation programs to anyone with a permanent disability. Promotes successful rehabilitation and ongoing quality of life through sports and competition. Conducts training camps to prepare and select athletes for the Summer and Winter Paralympic Games. DS/USA has a nationwide network of community–based chapters, which is listed on the website.

Canadian Wheelchair Sports Association

Resources for Wheelchair Exercisers

<http://www.cwsa.ca/home.html>

The CWSA is non–for–profit organization whose mission is to promote excellence and develop opportunities for Canadians in wheelchair sport.

Wheelchair Sports, USA

<http://www.wsusa.org/wsusa/>

Provides athletic experiences for disabled athletes that parallel those of mainstream athletes. The website states the organization is "directed and developed by wheelchair athletes and wheelchair sports enthusiasts alike, individuals with a first–hand understanding to the values of participation." Wheelchair Sports USA is recognized by the U.S. Olympic Committee, and also has offerings to junior athletes.

The Wheelchair Bodybuilding Page

<http://www.wsusa.org/wsusa/>

Contest schedule for Wheelchair Bodybuilding Contests, links to bodybuilding federations that promote wheelchair bodybuilding contests.

International Wheelchair Basketball Federation

<http://www.iwbf.org/>

National Wheelchair Basketball Federation

<http://www.nwba.org/index.php>

Extreme Sports

Traditional sports are fine, but what if tastes crave more extreme sporting activities? Not to worry. Check out the following sites for information about extreme wheelchair sports and get ready to be amazed...

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

<http://www.extrememike.com/>

Extreme enthusiast and motivational speaker Michael McKeller overcame spinal muscular atrophy to conquer extreme sports such as skydiving, scuba diving, boating, and flying. Offers extreme sports video series featuring McKeller in the pursuit of accomplishing one extreme sport at a time. His mission? "To invite everyone to take a look at how he does it and try it for themselves."

Mobility Engineering Inc.

<http://www.mobilityeng.com/>

Designer and manufacturer of adaptive sports equipment that opens up new adventures for disabled persons. Includes 100% arm–powered vehicles called the "Hand Bike" and the "Snow Pod." Website features past extreme trip details.

General and Recreational/Wheelchair Sport Websites

Resources for Wheelchair Exercisers

Wheelchairnet.org

http://www.wheelchairnet.org/WCN_Living/health.html

A "wheelchair virtual community" for people with a common interest in wheelchair technology and its application. An excellent resource for the wheelchair user. Site includes databases, slide lectures, article reprints, and discussion area.

Accessible Fitness

<http://www.accessibilitytraining.com/>

Take a look at this fitness center in Santa Clara, CA. Established to help the physically-challenged to attain both the physical and mental benefits of exercise, it offers a wheelchair accessible gym, in-home exercise programs, adaptive fitness personal trainers, workshops and more.

The Muscular Dystrophy Organization

<http://www.mdausa.org/>

Website carries loads of information, resources, and motivational stories.

Disabled Go Info

<http://www.mdausa.org/>

Offers detailed access information for disabled people across the UK.

Magazines

Sports n Spokes Magazine

<http://www.pvamagazines.com/sns/>

Magazine with international circulation covering the latest in competitive wheelchair sports and recreational opportunities.

Paralinks

<http://www.paralinks.net/>

The magazine for people with spinal cord injury. A web site dedicated exclusively for the wheelchair culture of the world.

It's clear that being in a wheelchair doesn't mean leading a sedentary lifestyle. For those individuals in wheelchairs who wish to exercise, remain active, or compete in sports, numerous resources exist. For those not in wheelchairs, take a look at any of the above links. You'll soon forget about using any of the old, worn-out excuses not to get off the couch and get active.

Jon Gestl, CSCS, is a Chicago personal trainer and fitness instructor who specializes in helping people get in shape in the privacy and convenience of their home or office. He is a United States National Aerobic Champion silver and bronze medalist and world-ranked sportaerobic competitor. He can be contacted through his website at <http://www.jongestl.com>.

The Truth About Disneyland And Disabilities

By Chris Elliott

Today, even disabled people can enjoy the wonder of Disneyland! If you are on crutches, you should ponder renting a Disneyland Scooter to get about the estate. The lease fee is \$35 per day, with a \$20 deposit. A valid driver's license is important, and you should be eighteen years old or older.

You can also choose to lease a wheelchair, which is not electronic. The rental fee for a wheelchair is \$8 per day, with a \$20 deposit. You do not need to lease your wheelchair or Scooter from Disneyland. You can choose to rent the apparatus from an undisclosed company, and have the wheelchair or scooter delivered to your hotel room. You may discover that it is cheaper to rent from a private company, as contrary to renting from Disneyland.

Cast members and assistance personnel will be happy to help with Visitor wheelchair transfers, and if you should part with a wheelchair or scooter that you've rented from Disneyland, wholly demonstrate the ticket for the wheelchair or scooter, and Disneyland will happily supply you with another one. Even so, if you lose a wheelchair or scooter that was rented from an outside company, Disneyland will not be capable to help you replace it, and you may have to pay the rental company the full price of the chair. This is something to consider when you are attempting to decide whether to rent from Disneyland or a private company.

All of the restaurants and shops are wheelchair reachable, as are the entertainment areas. When it comes to wheelchairs, your problem will be accessing some of the rides. Various rides are not suitable for individuals who are in wheelchairs, while others are perfectly apt. For example, you will not be able to appreciate Donald's Boat, Sailing Ship, or Tarzan's Tree house.

However, there are innumerable attractions that you can appreciate, such as The Disney Gallery, Disneyland Monorail, the Disneyland Railroad, the Tiki Room, The Gold Horseshoe, It's A Small World, Mark Twain Riverboat, and Tom Sawyer Island. Some attractions will require you to be transferred from your wheelchair, such as Alice in Wonderland, Indiana Jones, and the King Arthur Carrousel.

Whether or not you can enjoy a ride in your wheelchair, or you must be transferred from your wheelchair to the ride, you can in actuality enjoy most of the rides at Disneyland. Do not allow the fact that you can't walk about the park keep you from planning a Disneyland Vacation. Now there is no more excuse not to go have fun at Disneyland!

Chris Elliott manages

,

and

, websites providing free information and resources about toys. Visit

today for more articles and guides!



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