

## Benefits of Swimming

You're probably already aware of the benefits of exercise. Perhaps you've long been following a regimen that keeps you fit both physically and mentally. Perhaps you've promised yourself to start following one tomorrow. You're not going to let adolescence turn you into a couch potato. Be realistic, though. Unless you are committed, the odds are against you. That's why you should consider swimming.

Swimming is the best overall exercise, and it's time to develop this healthy habit. Just what makes swimming for fitness different from, say, jogging or walking or riding a bicycle? One thing: water—obviously. However, it's the relationship between water and the human body suspended in it that makes swimming the optimum lifetime fitness exercise. Two basic principles help to explain this relationship.

Swimming consists of many different strokes, each varying in difficulty and which muscles they work. Short sprints work the muscles anaerobically while swimming for a long time can help out aerobically. Swimming in warm water is soothing to sore muscles. Consider swimming as a new way to exercise to help all muscles of the body and isn't very hard on the joints.

## Steroids a Factor in Sports

By: Travis England  
Feature Reporter

Whether you like it or not steroids are a big part of today's professional sports and are now a big part of high school and college sports as well.

Baseball is the hot topic for steroids in the sports media with high profiled athletes being linked to steroids and HGH supplements.

Some of the athletes linked to performance enhancers are Barry Bonds (career home run leader), Alex Rodriguez (youngest player to reach 500 home runs), Garry Sheffield and future Hall-of-Fame pitcher Roger Clemens just to name a few.

Not just in baseball, steroids have been linked to football, wrestling, hockey, and other high-profiled professional sports. Steroids have been linked to the deaths as well. The most recent and most famous death do to steroids involved WWE wrestler Chris Benoit who strangled his 7 year old son and then suffocated his wife before taking his life.

This is not the only concern; younger kids are using steroids, HGH, and other performance enhancement

drugs more then ever.

Kids feel that they are pressured more then ever by their parents and coaches to be able to excel in their chosen sport. Some kids have even resorted to taking the easy way out and started using performance enhancers instead of doing it the right way through hard work.

So this brings up the big question. Should schools start testing for steroids and other performance enhancers for athletics?

Moline Senior baseball pitcher Chris Larsen believes, "Schools don't need to test for steroids because not many high school athletes take them right now. But in 5 to 10 years, it would have to be mandatory to test the athletes because that more kids will be using them due to increasing pressure to excell." Due to better technology it will be easier to test student-athletes, but at the same time it may become harder for the authorities to detect the drugs.

Although not opposed to drug testing, Todd Rosenthal, Moline's Athletic Director, says that recent research has not proven it to be a deterrent in student drug use. He also points out that it is not financially feasible.

## Students Staying Fit

By: Melanie Miljush  
Feature Reporter

With obesity growing at a steady rate, students need to take at least 30 minutes out of their day to exercise.

According to the Agriculture Department's Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion, 30 minutes a day is the least amount of time people should spend exercising. New government recommendations are suggesting that 60-90 minutes is the ideal amount of time for losing weight and keeping it off.

Kevin Gorgal, a P.E. and drivers education teacher here at Moline said, "Students should do something everyday; it doesn't have to be high intensity everyday, just as long as they're moving."

Statistics provided by overweightteen.com, have shown that 50% of youth ages 12-21 take part in vigorous physical activity every day. About 25% do light to moderate activity, and the other 25% don't participate in any type of physical activity.

Working out for an hour three days a week, junior Spenser Warren believes that exercising doesn't only provide for a healthy, long-lived life, but it also "builds confidence." "I really just go and do it. I don't really have a person I'm looking

at and say I want to be like that. I do what's best for me. Gotta self motivate." said Warren. For most people getting motivated and actually going to the gym is the hardest part of it all, but Warren finds his motivation within himself.

Not all students have the same kind of enthusiasm as Spenser though. Senior, Mike Blair, can't seem to fit the recommended 30 minutes a day into his schedule. "At this stage in my life, my metabolism is high enough where I can eat as much as I want and not gain weight... for now," Mike said.

Metabolism is the rate at which the body turns nutrients in the food that a person eats into energy. At age 30, most people's metabolism starts to slow down due to the decrease in lean muscle mass. The best way to keep metabolism up is physical activity.

Since the 1970's the percentage of overweight teens has doubled. "Students used to stay outside and play until the street lights come on," Gorgal said.

Now students have adapted to a lifestyle of watching their favorite weekly television shows and playing hours upon hours of video games instead of getting physical. Studies recommend only 30 minutes a day of physical activity, so students just need to find their motivation and get more active.



## Top 10 Cardio Activities

- 1. Running-** An easy activity because it does not require special equipment and can be done anywhere. Add hills and sprints to your workout to maximize on benefits.
- 2. Cross-Country Skiing-** Whether on a gym machine or in the snow, it gets both the upper and lower body moving which makes it easy to get the heart rate soaring.
- 3. Bicycling-** A great exercise that can be done both indoors and outdoors, it uses all power in one's legs. The key to biking is resistance and speed to burn calories.
- 4. Elliptical Trainer-** A great break from running, which will protect the joints of the body. Also it will build endurance and some machines allow for use of the arms.
- 5. Swimming-** A full body exercise that can protect the joints. Great way to exercise without the risk of high-impact injuries.
- 6. Step Aerobics-** A tough exercise that targets the legs, butt, and hips. While looking hard, step aerobics is easily learned and can progress to more difficult workouts
- 7. Rowing-** Often overlooked in the weight room due its complexity, if rowing is done right the rewards are huge, including high heart rate and good arm work out.
- 8. Rock Climbing-** Uses the strength of arms and legs but this is very hard to learn. Also, rock climbing requires lots of special equipment and training.
- 9. Walking-** A regular exercise can be varied by changing the route and adding weights. Also going briskly, adding hills, or even a light jog will add to the calories burned.
- 10. Handball-** A difficult sport to learn, includes side to side sprints which will strengthen the legs and when played competitively results in an elevated heart rate.