

EVENTS:
GREAT ESCAPE- MARCH 9: IRELAND
NEW THIS YEAR: THE LONG DAM SWIM
INDOOR TRIATHLON: MARCH 31ST

LIFEGUARD OF THE MONTH

KARLY

REC. SPEC. OF THE MONTH

JAKE



February is the month of hearts. All around you'll see hearts--wall decorations, stickers, candies, cards, and that little graphic on the treadmill, the elliptical machine, and the exercise bikes. What does this last heart signify? Cardiovascular fitness is paramount for life. Without an efficient pump, sending blood to the lungs and then pushing it to the rest of your body to feed your organs and muscles, you suffer from a myriad of problems, ranging from shortness of breath to death. Since neither of these is desirable, what's the best thing you can do for your most important muscle? Exercise it! **It will only get stronger if you give it a reason.** No one is born with a heart that's ready to let you run a marathon, swim 10 laps, or ride your bike for 40 miles. You need to give it a reason to improve, and simply walking around isn't going to make it better.



Just like any muscle, it needs to be taxed to get stronger. If you've had heart health issues, you and your doctor need to decide how hard it should be taxed. He/she will tell you the maximum heart rate at which you should exercise. If your heart is healthy, here's an easy way to figure out how hard you should exercise: Pick a pace you can maintain for a few minutes as a warm-up. Now increase your intensity (steeper incline on the treadmill, higher resistance on the elliptical or bike, etc.) to a pace you can only maintain for a few minutes. After five or six minutes at this higher pace, reduce the intensity again, and repeat a few times. By doing this, you will teach your ticker to recover faster, and you'll also burn more fat than if you pick a single speed for the whole workout. This type of training more closely resembles the way we actually work in real life, and will help increase your metabolism.

So when you give out a chocolate heart this Valentine's Day, make sure you've already taken care of your own. Shoot for 15 to 60 minutes of cardiovascular exercise 4 days per week. Reduce body fat, increase heart efficiency, reduce your chances of Type II diabetes, and increase the likelihood you'll be around to give out chocolate hearts for years to come.

-**Russ Craber, CSCS** [Fitness Physiology](#) | [RussFit](#)



When most people think of February Valentine's Day springs immediately to mind. Despite this month containing Groundhog's Day, President's Day, Washington's, and Lincoln's birthdays; its images of pink and red hearts, flowers, and chalky candies with sweet sayings that override the second month of the year. I'm not necessarily opposed to this, especially if you ask my wife. However this year I would encourage you to take the interests of the heart literally. Good cardiovascular health is extremely important for us in every age and stage of our lives; our heart is the one muscle that we use every minute of every day. If you think about it: having a healthy and efficient heart is much better for you in the long run than bulging biceps or rock hard abs.



I mentioned in last month's newsletter how we traditionally see several new faces around here in January with people making resolutions to lose weight or get trim. Sadly by late February we start seeing less and less of those faces as peoples' interest and commitment taper off. I know from personal experience that my fitness goals never seem achievable because I put the emphasis on how I look and not how I FEEL. This year I'm focusing on the positives: I can run a mile faster now than I could two weeks ago, even if my waist hasn't shrunk. And my heart rate is lower when I do it. Now those are some positive results! So this year make another resolution on Valentine's Day to stick to your fitness goal even if you aren't seeing the results you expected.

And don't forget to buy your sweetheart flowers.

-Nick Bacon, Director



Water Exercise the Best way to strengthen your Core and reach an ideal postural alignment.

Hello I'm Eva, one of the Water Art Instructors here at the Aquatic Center. If you have come to one of my Water Fitness classes before then you have heard my phrases: "Work your Core," or "Tighten your Core," and what goes with it: "Straight Posture".

I don't repeat myself over and over because those are the only words I know in the English language, ☺ rather because it's so important for a healthy muscular structure. Core exercise should be a part of every exercise program.

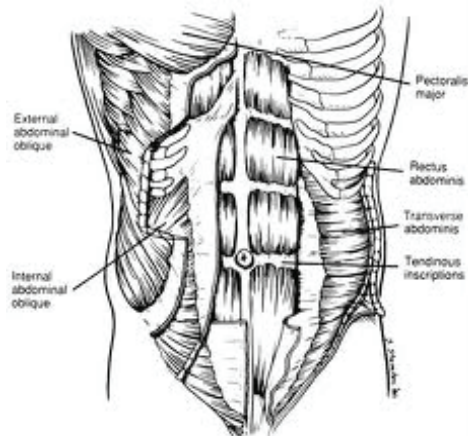
Why should you strengthen your Core?

A weak Core can cause numerous health problems as you will be prone to: poor posture, lower back pain, muscle injuries, and bad balance. Summarized- it will result in musculoskeletal pain and strain, if not even worse. Strong core muscles provide the brace and support needed to help prevent such pain and injuries.

Your Core muscles need to be strong yet flexible. A weak or inflexible core impairs how well your arms and legs function, draining power from many of the moves you make. Your core strength relates to the muscles in your abs and back and their ability to support your spine and keep your body stable and balanced.

Your core is composed (as you can see in the picture) of many different muscles in the abdomen, back, sides, pelvis, and buttocks. Together they form a sturdy central link between your upper and lower body. These muscles work together to allow you to bend, twist, rotate, and stand upright. The deepest of the abdominal muscles (Transverse Abdominis) lie under the oblique's (muscles of your waist). It acts like a weight belt, wrapping around your spine for protection and stability. When you have good core stability, the muscles in your pelvis, lower back, hips and abdomen work in harmony. They provide support to your spine for just about any activity.

So that's why I always remind you to work your Core at my water aerobics classes. ☺ I try to make sure you get the best benefit possible from your workout. Please let me know if you have any health problems; if they are relevant to our fitness program. If you have any restrictions from your Doctor, please follow them throughout my classes☺.



HEY DON'T FORGET:
ZUMBA EVERY TUES/THURS, 6:00A
WATER AEROBICS CLASSES AVAILABLE MON-SAT