

# Water Exercise Improves Mobility

Rosemary George knows how easy it is to take mobility for granted, until you lose it. For years, she enjoyed an active lifestyle with interests in hiking, horseback riding and leading her champion collies through the paces at dog shows. All of that changed abruptly in 2013 after hip replacement surgery.

“I am one of the few who had a bad outcome and a long recovery,” she said. “There’s a lot of scar tissue in my hip, and now it doesn’t function properly.”

The retired government technical writer says Park Authority water exercise classes made all the difference in helping her regain her mobility. She says the buoyancy of the water challenges her muscles with little impact on her joints.

“Water exercise is really the only exercise I can do at this point,” she said. “The instructors at Spring Hill RECenter have been really helpful and supportive.”

She was counting on that support to help her recover from knee replacement surgery in the spring. Then the COVID-19 pandemic hit, shuttering RECenters. With no access to the pool and a state-mandated stay-at-home order in place, George realized how much she needed the healing power of water exercise.

“My number one goal was to get back in the water, then everything was locked down,” she recalled. “The scar tissue tightened up, I was in constant pain, and I needed to use a cane for stability.”



When RECenters reopened in July, George says she couldn’t wait to make a reservation to work out in the Spring Hill pool. After just one week of daily, 90-minute water-walking sessions, George regained her mobility and proclaimed herself cane-free.

“I try to go every day in the 3:30 p.m. time slot,” she said enthusiastically. “The COVID-19 safety precautions are extremely thorough, and I really appreciate everything the staff is doing to keep us safe. I’ve been completely confident, and others seem to be following the rules.”

Now that she’s back on her feet, George is determined to live her life to the fullest. She still breeds and shows collies, although she eagerly watches from the sidelines while a handler leads them through their paces. She appreciates the structure her daily RECenter pool reservation and workout bring to her day, and in the midst of the pandemic, she takes time to reflect on the things for which she is grateful, like her mobility and the opportunities that help her maintain her independence.

“I try to spend some time every day thinking of all the good things in my life,” she wrote in a note of appreciation to the Park Authority, “and these days, ‘pool reopened’ is part of that!”

