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## Going for a jog? Try treading (under) water

Special treadmills in shallow swimming pools are making a big splash with many who haven't had access to them before.

By [Jeff Strickler](#), Star Tribune

Underwater treadmills, once accessible only to professional athletes and rehab clinics, are finding a market with the general public. And the public is jumping in with both feet.

The treadmills, which are in a waist-deep swimming pool, are attracting a wide range of users, from marathoners looking for the extra resistance training that comes from moving their legs through water to pregnant women using the water's buoyancy to take the strain of aerobic pounding off their knees and ankles.

"We have clients who are kids and clients who are senior citizens," said Chris Kost, who oversees the underwater training program at the Accua training center (8690 Eagle Creek Pkwy., Savage). "We have elite athletes who come in for intense training sessions. And we have a client with MS who comes because, in the pool, he can move without a cane."

Kost was director of aquatic rehabilitation at Hennepin County Medical Center in Minneapolis until he heard about the opening of the Accua center. The hospital, like several other rehabilitation facilities in the Twin Cities, uses an underwater treadmill for patients who have had knee, hip or ankle surgery. But access to those pools is limited to those with doctors' orders.

"The professional [athletic] teams have them, and a handful of senior centers have them, but our doors are open to people of any age and any ability," he said. "These are very popular on the East Coast."

The treadmill is motorized so that a trainer can control the speed of the workout. In addition, a battery of water jets can be used to increase the workload for those looking for even more intense exercise.

"As a person's overall condition improves, we can increase the resistance," Kost said. "Marathoners tell us that when they do land training they can run much faster because they aren't fighting through the water."

Grant Nanhof, a high school senior from Plymouth, has been visiting Accua to prepare for the upcoming baseball season. He tore a ligament in his knee this past fall and was worried that he would have to forgo his final year of baseball, a concern heightened by the fact that college scouts had him on their list of potential scholarship players.

His neighbor, Linda Muller, a trainer at Accua, suggested that he try jogging on the treadmill while his knee healed. He's been doing so twice a week all winter and is confident that he'll be ready to take the field by the time the snow is gone.

"The best part is that it's fun," he said. "Every time I come, it seems like I've only been in the pool for 10 minutes when they tell me my half-hour is up."

Jeff Strickler • 612-673-7392 • [jstrickler@startribune.com](mailto:jstrickler@startribune.com)

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