

## Aqua Vitality Exercise: Enhancing Function, Motivation, and Quality of Life in Women 40+ During Pre-Menopause, Menopause, and Post-Menopause

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### Abstract

Maintaining regular physical activity during pre-menopause, menopause, and post-menopause presents significant challenges due to hormonal changes that can lead to joint stiffness, muscle tightness, reduced mobility, fatigue, and emotional disturbances such as low mood and depression. Many women discontinue exercise because of discomfort, fear of injury, or lack of motivation. Based on extensive practical experience delivering the Aqua Vitality Exercise Program across the Middle East and Asia, and aligned with established sport medicine protocols, aquatic exercise provides a supportive, low-impact environment that promotes both physical and psychological well-being in women aged 40 and above. Participants commonly demonstrate improvements in mobility, reduction in stiffness, enhanced mood, increased energy levels, and greater adherence to exercise programs. The unique properties of water-including buoyancy, hydrostatic pressure, resistance, and thermal effects-facilitate safe movement, muscular strengthening, and relaxation while minimizing joint stress. Additionally, the social and therapeutic aspects of aquatic exercise contribute to improved emotional health and sustained participation. Aqua Vitality Exercise, when implemented with structured progression and individualized considerations, represents an effective, evidence-informed strategy to support functional capacity, emotional resilience, and long-term quality of life in women during menopause stages.

**Keywords:** Aqua Vitality Exercise; Motivation; Quality of Life; Women; Pre-Menopause; Menopause; Post-Menopause

### Why water changes the exercise experience

Water possesses unique physical properties that cannot be reproduced during land-based exercise.

These include:

- Buoyancy, which reduces joint loading and relieves pressure on stiff joints.
- Hydrostatic pressure, which improves circulation and reduces swelling.
- Water resistance, providing safe and controlled muscular strengthening.
- Warm water, which promotes muscle relaxation and reduces stiffness.
- Increased balance challenge with reduced risk of falling.

Together, these characteristics create a safe and comfortable environment for movement, especially for women experiencing hormonal changes that affect joints, muscles, and mood. All exercise protocols applied within the Aqua Vitality program are aligned with sport medicine guidelines to ensure safety and effectiveness.

### **Clinical observations in women 40+ during menopause stages**

In my practice across the Middle East and Asia, many women aged 40 and above in pre-menopause, menopause, and post-menopause report:

- Reduction in joint stiffness and muscle tightness.
- Improved flexibility and ease of movement.
- Increased daily energy levels.
- Reduced feelings of depression and emotional stress.
- Improved confidence in physical activity.
- Better sleep quality.
- Higher attendance and long-term adherence to exercise programs.

Many participants who initially struggled with stiffness, discomfort, and low mood began to experience gradual improvement after consistent participation in Aqua Vitality sessions. The supportive aquatic environment helps reduce physical discomfort while also promoting relaxation and mental well-being.

One of the strongest observations has been motivation. Women who previously avoided exercise due to pain or emotional fatigue continue attending sessions because the water environment makes movement enjoyable, safe, and uplifting. These outcomes have been consistently observed when programs are delivered following sport medicine protocols and individualized progression principles.

### **Joint and muscle stiffness in menopause**

Hormonal changes during menopause often lead to increased joint stiffness, muscle tightness, and reduced mobility. Many women experience discomfort during weight-bearing activities, which discourages regular exercise.

Aquatic exercise reduces joint stress through buoyancy while allowing controlled strengthening of:

- Core musculature.
- Hip stabilizers.
- Gluteal muscles.
- Postural muscles.

Warm water further enhances muscle relaxation and reduces stiffness, allowing women to move more freely and comfortably. In my programs implemented in the Middle East and Asia, exercises are structured according to sport medicine rehabilitation principles to ensure gradual progression and safety.

### **Emotional well-being and depression**

Menopause is often associated with emotional changes, including anxiety, mood swings, and depression. Physical activity plays a key role in improving mental health, but many women struggle to engage in traditional exercise due to discomfort or lack of motivation.

The Aqua Vitality environment supports emotional well-being by:

- Promoting relaxation through warm water immersion.
- Encouraging social interaction and group support.
- Reducing physical discomfort, which improves mood.
- Enhancing confidence and self-esteem.

Many participants report feeling calmer, more positive, and emotionally balanced after regular sessions. The combination of movement, water therapy, and social engagement contributes significantly to improved mental health.

### **Why participants continue**

Long-term success depends not only on exercise prescription but also on adherence.

Several factors contribute to the high continuation rate observed in Aqua Vitality programs for women in menopause stages:

- Reduced pain and stiffness during movement.
- Immediate feeling of lightness and comfort in water.
- Emotional relief and improved mood.
- Group motivation and social connection.
- Increased confidence in physical ability.
- Enjoyment of exercise.
- Progressive improvement in mobility and strength.

When women feel both physically and emotionally supported, they are significantly more likely to maintain regular exercise. This has been consistently observed across diverse populations in the Middle East and Asia when programs are delivered using structured sport medicine approaches.

### **Aqua vitality and physiotherapy: Complementary roles**

Physiotherapy and aquatic exercise serve different but complementary roles.

Physiotherapists assess, diagnose, and manage specific musculoskeletal conditions through individualized rehabilitation.

Aqua vitality exercise provides a structured, progressive exercise environment that supports ongoing physical activity, improves mobility, reduces stiffness, enhances mood, and promotes overall wellness. The program is designed and implemented in accordance with sport medicine protocols to ensure safe progression and functional outcomes.

For many women in pre-menopause, menopause, and post-menopause, the combination of physiotherapy when clinically indicated followed by regular aquatic exercise may provide an effective long-term strategy for maintaining mobility, emotional well-being, and independence.

### **Conclusion**

The success of any exercise program depends not only on physical benefits but also on emotional engagement and consistency.

In my experience as a Sport Science Trainer working across the Middle East and Asia, Aqua Vitality Exercise has shown significant positive impact on women aged 40 and above experiencing menopause-related challenges. Participants who initially suffered from joint stiffness, muscle tightness, and depression have demonstrated clear improvements in mobility, confidence, and emotional well-being.

Delivered according to sport medicine protocols, this approach supports safe and effective progression. My practice since 2019, conducted in collaboration with sport injury clinics, spinal injury centers, and sport science universities, has consistently shown that aquatic exercise is a valuable, evidence-informed strategy for improving quality of life, reducing stiffness, enhancing mood, and supporting long-term physical activity in women during pre-menopause, menopause, and post-menopause [1-6].

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