



COLD WATER SWIMMING

Between October and April, members of the Barnstaple Health & Leisure can take advantage of our outdoor pool for cold water swimming.

During this period, the pool will NOT be heated, offering the perfect opportunity for those seeking the benefits of cold water therapy. The temperature is taken daily and recorded on the gate.

Cold water swimming has been linked to numerous health benefits and we invite our members to enjoy this unique wellness opportunity throughout the cooler months.

Benefits of Cold-Water Swimming

- Improved Circulation: The body's response to cold water may stimulate blood flow, enhancing circulation and promoting better oxygen delivery to muscles and organs.
- Boosted Immune System: Regular exposure to cold water may help strengthen the immune system, making the body more resilient to infections.
- Enhanced Mental Health: Cold water swimming may reduce stress, anxiety and depression by releasing endorphins, the body's natural mood boosters.
- Faster Muscle Recovery: Cold water therapy may help reduce inflammation and muscle soreness after exercise, aiding in faster recovery.
- Improved Skin & Hair: Cold water tightens pores and may promote better skin tone, while also stimulating healthy hair growth by improving scalp circulation.
- Better Sleep Quality: Exposure to cold water may improve sleep quality by helping to regulate the body's internal clock and reduce stress.



Breathing Techniques

It's always good to stretch and warm up before a swim and practice your breathing. We find that when you enter cold water, the shock can mean that you involuntarily exhale. This needs to be overcome as it can lead to hyperventilation and panic. To counteract this, we shut our eyes, and concentrate on our breathing: long meaningful breaths, breathing in through the nose and out through the mouth. It's a good idea to place your hands on your chest so you can feel your diaphragm working. Remind yourself to keep on breathing as you enter the water.

A more complex routine is called box breathing. This involves breathing in for three seconds, holding your breath for three seconds, exhaling for three seconds and then holding with no breath for a further three seconds. Repeat this five to ten times.

Please note we are within our right to close the pool if it is deemed appropriate.

Barnstaple Health & Leisure does not endorse or claim any health benefits from cold water swimming.

SAFETY TIPS

Cold water swimming offers many benefits, but it's important to approach it safely.

By following these simple do's and don'ts, you'll enjoy the benefits of cold water swimming safely and responsibly!

Do's:

- Acclimate slowly: If you're new to cold water swimming, start with shorter sessions
 and gradually increase the duration over time.
- Wear a wetsuit or thermal swimwear: Consider wearing a wetsuit or thermal gear to
 protect your body from the extreme cold, especially if you plan to swim for long periods.
- Warm up before entering: Engage in a gentle warm-up to get your body moving and prepare for the cold water.
- Listen to your body: Pay attention to how your body feels. If you experience shivering, numbness, or dizziness, it's time to get out of the water and warm up.
- · Stay hydrated: Make sure to drink plenty of fluids before and after your swim.
- Have a warm-up routine ready: After swimming, be sure to have a warm towel, hot
 drink, and warm clothes to help your body return to a comfortable temperature.
- Swim with a buddy: For safety, always swim with a friend, especially if you are not an experienced cold water swimmer.

Don'ts:

- Jump straight in: Sudden immersion can cause shock to your system. Always enter the water slowly to help your body adjust.
- Stay in too long: Limit your time in the cold water to avoid hypothermia. Keep it to a few minutes, especially if you're new to cold water swimming.
- Swim alone: Cold water swimming can be unpredictable. Always swim with someone else.
- Swim if you're feeling unwell: Avoid cold water swimming if you're feeling under the weather or if you have any health concerns, such as heart issues.
- Dive into the water: Cold water can cause an immediate shock response, so avoid diving or submerging your head quickly.
- Skip post-swim care: Failing to warm up after your swim can lead to serious health issues, including hypothermia. Make sure to take care of your body after swimming.

Barnstaple Health & Leisure does not endorse or claim any health benefits from cold water swimming. We accept no liability for any health-related issues that may occur, and participation is at your own risk. If you have any underlying health conditions or medical concerns, please consult your GP before cold water swimming.

BARNSTAPLE HEALTH & LEISURE



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