

## BENEFITS OF SWIMMING

The benefits of swimming for dogs are very similar to those for humans. Swimming involves the use of almost all the muscles required for movement, without the concussive stresses of walking or running. Also, because water resistance is greater than air resistance, the muscles have to work harder.

1 minutes' swimming is equivalent to about 4 minutes of running, according to a recent veterinarian's study.

However, swimming has the benefit of achieving this level of work on the muscles, improving strength and tone, and working the cardio-vascular and respiratory systems, without the impact of unsupported exercise or the associated damage that can cause.

In fit dogs, swimming can be used as a supplementary form of exercise to improve strength and stamina. Stronger, toned muscles help to protect dogs against injuries sustained during normal exercise; such as running or chasing a ball, or during more demanding exercise such as agility and fly-ball. Swimming should be used in conjunction with normal exercise to ensure the dogs' bones are also kept strong and healthy and prepared for exercise on land.

For dogs with medical conditions that restrict or prohibit normal exercise, swimming is vital.

For example, in the case of a total hip replacement operation, it is important to build up the supporting muscle prior to the operation. However, walking and running are unsuitable forms of exercise, whereas swimming enables supported, non-concussive exercise to build the muscles. And after the operation when exercise is limited, swimming can increase the amount

of exercise done and help recovery to normal fitness.

For conditions such as osteo-arthritis, hip-dysplasia, osteochondrosis dissecans (OCD) and chronic degenerative radiculo myelopathy (CDRM), swimming provides weightless exercise to improve joint movement, increase circulation and build supporting muscle, where walking on hard ground can be uncomfortable and cause lameness.

For weight loss, swimming provides a form of supported exercise, enabling good use of muscles and improving the metabolic rate. It can be difficult to give an overweight dog sufficient exercise on land without over-stressing bones and joints, so swimming is an excellent complementary exercise.

As with any fitness programme, you should expect to start gently and increase the exercise over time. Don't be surprised if your dog swims for only a few minutes to begin with. Gradually, as their fitness improves, they will be able to swim for longer periods.

Our water is heated to a comfortable 28° Celsius. This helps relaxation and assists blood flow. It also helps to reduce muscle spasm and improve the dogs' range of movement. This is more comfortable for the dogs, making swimming in a heated pool much more enjoyable. The more they enjoy it, the harder they tend to work, and the more benefit they get from it.

At **K9 Fit Fur Fun**, our mission is to provide your dog with not only a safe, clean environment in which to play in water; but also one which can help him or her in their pre or post op care. For overweight dogs, we offer an effective method in reducing weight in a healthy and safe manner. For senior dogs and dogs with joint and hip problems, **K9 Fit Fur Fun** is a healthy way for them to get the exercise they need without the stress that normal running and jumping would cause.

