

was wonderful. After about 15 years lapse, the thought of swimming again was a pipe dream. In the early 1900's I used to swim regularly about once a week. I enjoyed doing eight laps of the pool using each of the four strokes I knew so well. I had to give this up when the struggle to enter and exit the pool became exhausting. My polio-affected muscles were slowly weakening the after effects of having had paralytic polio half a century ago in 1942. I began using a scooter full-time around 1995. What did it feel like? I knew I had to find out if I could still swim, so I immediately dashed across the pool in the water with flaring arms and legs struggling to power me on. No, I can't swim again like before, but I am able to move around freely in the warm water with movements such as standing, raising my legs, and walking holding onto a noodle. After my twenty-minute dip, my whole body tingled well into the night. What a thrill! I feel that was a wake-up call upon my muscles. The new pool lift and the aid of Deb Goin, Art Jones, and Activities Coordinator Kathi Rose made this possible. I hope the once a week exercise will strengthen my stronger muscles and improve my overall functioning. I find moving around in the water and trying to stay on the noodle stimulating. Out of the water, I've already found my muscles work more smoothly and I have more energy. Using the lift was a pleasant surprise because with my limited strength I was a little afraid of using it. However, the lift lowered me gently into the water where I just floated off and could hold onto the side of the pool to get my bearings. Exiting the pool was equally easy. I just sat on the seat in the water, and the ascent followed when ready. Once out of the water, Jones was at my side helping me move back onto my scooter. Goin added this comment. The benefit of warm water therapy for individuals with post-polio syndrome is that warm water increases the metabolic rate, heart rate, circulation, and respiratory rate. As a result, one tends to think better and feel sharper after water exercises. And, of course, muscles that are hardly used on dry land are strengthened by being used in the water exercises, and this increases stability.

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