

Adaptive CrossFit

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One of the most popular workout programs today is CrossFit. CrossFit boxes, the gyms where CrossFit athletes exercise, are springing up all across the US and in many other places throughout the entire world. The workout program now even hosts international competitions.

What exactly is CrossFit? According to www.crossfit.com, "CrossFit...is defined as that which optimizes fitness (constantly varied functional movements performed at relatively high intensity)." It's a wonderful concept--the individual's own body becomes the principal instrument in exercise rather than relying on machines to do much of the work. Some equipment is used in CrossFit, but it doesn't rely on it for the bulk of the workout. Box jumps, pull-ups, push-ups, and lifting weights are some of the typical activities in a WOD (workout of the day). WODS are varied from day to day to maintain interest. While a certain number of activities are recommended to be accomplished within a certain time frame, those that cannot complete them at that level are encouraged to "scale" them to their capability level. Thus, if one cannot do a push-up in the normal way, a "scaled" push-up would be to do it on one's knees, while maintaining the typical push-up stance. Or if everyone else is doing 15 push-ups in 15 minutes, a "scaled" activity might be to do 10 in 15 minutes. CrossFit is the creation of Coach Greg Glassman over several decades.

So perhaps it was not such a far stretch for Anna Woods of McPherson, Kansas, a certified Level 1 CrossFit instructor, to develop the concept of CrossFit adapted for those with physical and mental disabilities. However, she is to be commended for it. Now individuals with disabilities in her area of the country have the opportunity to participate in an exercise regime, just like other people. She offers classes for people in wheelchairs and has other classes for those who can walk, but may have developmental delays such as Down Syndrome or have mild physical impairments. And this is where her creative bent comes into play. She seems to have an innate sense as to how to work with this population. She uses music they like (Michael Jackson is a favorite), while pairing it with movements they already know, such as those used in cleaning a kitchen. For those in wheelchairs to do a pull-up, she ties stretch bands to a cone in the center of the group. The participants then pull on grips s attached to the bands, and pull as far as their range of motion permits.

Along the way, she has found that repetition is the key. With a lot of repetition before another new concept is introduced, these individuals can learn to perform and participate in ways they never thought possible. They also

Adaptive CrossFit (con't)

are incredibly responsive to music. Music just seems to make it a more interesting experience and occupy the mind, while hands, arms, and legs are occupied. The result is a tremendous increase in self-esteem for people who may have felt left out of the fitness movement. Kudos to Anna Woods of Kansas!

(Anna Woods with Emily Beers, "Lifeline to Independence," [The CrossFit Journal](#), October 2013)



Reducing Pet Cancer Risk

Hook Law Center: Kit Kat, what are the best ways to reduce a pet's cancer risk?

Kit Kat: Well, you may not have known this before, but cancer is the #1 cause of death in pets. So anything that can be done to reduce the risk is great news for both pet and pet owner alike. Here are some simple things that can be done to lessen the risk. First, make sure your pet maintains a healthy weight. Sometimes that's a challenge if you have multiple pets, like exist in my house, but it's extremely important. Just as with people, more than half of pets are overweight. There are serious, health repercussions obviously that accompany this condition, like diabetes, high blood pressure, and some types of cancer.

Second, reduce your pet's exposure to carcinogens like secondhand tobacco smoke or fertilizers for the yard which include harmful substances. Chemical-free fertilizers are best. Pets that roam outdoors can pick up things on their fur and feet. In grooming themselves, they then ingest potentially, cancer-causing substances.

Lastly, be aware of signs that something is wrong with your pet's health. If there is sudden weight loss or lack of appetite, these are signs that something may be wrong. Other warning signs are abnormal swellings, bleeding or unusual discharges, unusual odors, sores that do not heal, or labored breathing. When any of these occur, it is time to take your pet to the vet. Sometimes, conditions that are caught early enough can be cured. In other cases, there is nothing that can be done. However, even in terminal cases, the vet is well qualified to make your pet's final days as comfortable as possible with pain relievers. It's always best to know what condition you and your pet are facing.

(<http://shine.yahoo.com/pets/3-ways-reduce-pets-cancer-risk-130200666.html>) (11-13-2013)

Upcoming Events

- Hook Law Center will be presenting a webinar on the Affordable Care Act and Elder Law and Special Needs Planning on **December 4, 2013**. This webinar will be hosted by Interactive Legal.
- Shannon Laymon-Pecoraro, Esq. will speak at the Parkinson's and Caregivers Coffee Break on medical/legal issues concerning elders and those with significant health issues. The coffee break will take place at St. Andrew's United Methodist Church, 717 Tucson Rd., Virginia Beach, VA 23462 on February 5, 2014 from 10AM-12:00PM.

- Hook Law Center is a sponsor of the American Heart Association Ball which will take place on March 8, 2014 at the Norfolk Botanical Gardens. For event information, contact Stephanie Phipps at 757-628-2608
- Hook Law Center will be presenting a live webinar on POAs, AMDs and the Ethics of It All in Charlottesville, VA on **April 10, 2014**. This webinar will be hosted by Virginia Continuing Legal Education.
- Shannon Laymon-Pecoraro, an attorney at Hook Law Center, is a member of the advisory board of the Hampton Roads Chapter of the American Parkinson Disease Association. Please visit our website if you have any questions about this event on April 12, 2014.

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