

Active Health Column

with
Lorraine Petterson



We have so many requests for assistive devices that it's only right we start to cover them in THISABILITY. An assistive device is anything that may improve, increase or maintain functionality in a disabled person as defined by the World Health Organisation.

What about an assistive device that improves the fitness levels of a disabled person? All too often the person and their carer don't even give this a thought but many of these products provide huge health benefits to the disabled, the elderly, stroke victims, neurological disease sufferers, diabetics, convalescing & rehab patients and obviously anyone who is overweight.

The best example I can give is a passive exerciser, which is one of the best loved products we have available. A passive exerciser does all the work for you, yes, all the work! You just relax, watch TV, listen to music or read and enjoy a lovely, soothing session as the passive works either legs or arms, to provide much needed exercise.

There are a number of different passives in the market and they all essentially do the same job. Some passives have a built in LCD display showing calories used during a session (normally 30 mins), distance travelled, RPM's, speed and time. However, the most important aspect in choosing a passive is that it has a built in safety cut out switch that turns the machine off automatically when a spasm or similar sudden, unexpected movement is felt.

Some of the benefits of a passive exerciser are:

- **Improved circulation:**
- **Increase in cardiac capacity which promotes greater blood flow around the body;**
- **Increase in mobility of the joints:**
- **Decrease in muscle spasms:**
- **Increased flexibility of muscles:**
- **Relieves stress, promotes relaxation & assists in regular sleeping patterns:**

A lovely story is of Tanya from Plettenburg Bay. Tanya has Cerebral Palasy and has been a wheelchair user for many years. Tanya has also had to endure many operations over the years on her legs and hips. Last year she heard on the grapevine about the new range of passives we had imported and contacted us immediately. Lucky for Tanya we were about to travel to the biggest wheelchair race in SA, the Outeniqua Wheelchair Challenge in George so we took a

detour to Plett to show her one. There and then she fell in love. We literally had to prise her away from the machine with strict orders that she was to get the go-ahead from her physio and surgeon first as she had had so many different operations, not least the pins in her hips.

Tanya's mum Rea, came back to us with the news that both physio and surgeon gave their blessings for Tanya to use the passive daily, telling her this was the best thing she could do for herself.

"My Passive exerciser has already changed my life for the better! It makes me feel so "Free" and has loosened up my legs a great deal. Additionally I no longer get stabbing pins and needles in my legs at night due to lack of movement. This exerciser is a life-changer as I am also now able to transfer much more easily. " Excerpt taken from Mobility Solutions Facebook Page

The THISABILITY team is able to offer special discounts on passives to their readers, so please visit their website and check them out for yourself. Next month we'll chat about other assistive devices. If you have any specific queries please email me on info@mobilitysolutions.co.za and I will answer you personally.

NB. Before embarking on any exercise routine, I strongly advise you get the all clear from your doctor and/or therapist.

