

Breast  
Health

News

# Almost one in five women are deterred from exercise by their breasts!

Participation in regular exercise has many health benefits. However, female participation in exercise starts to decline during adolescence with only 32 per cent of women in England currently meeting the physical activity guidelines. Time constraints, a lack of support from peers and family, and issues with confidence have all been previously reported as exercise deterrents

## What do mature women need from a bra?

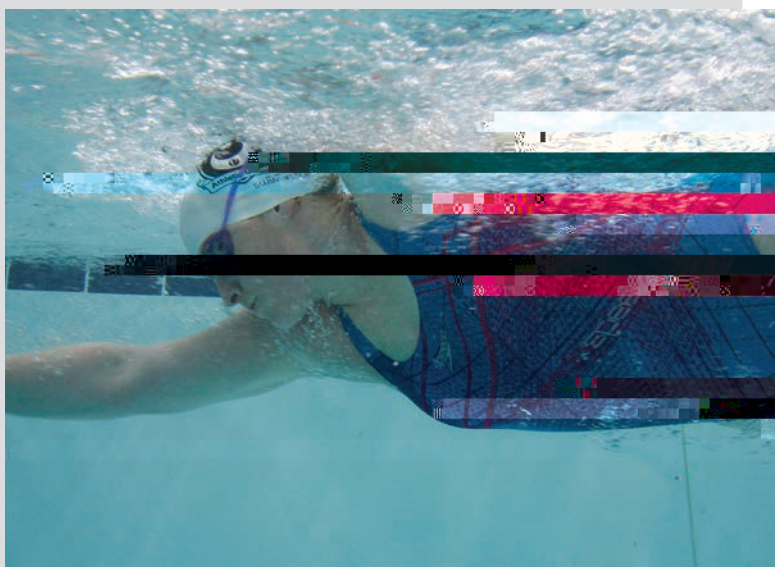
There are many products available which aim to mask the outward signs of increasing age. One such example is the bra which is designed to lift and shape the breasts into a more youthful position. It is therefore surprising that bras are typically designed and marketed using younger

## Should I wear a sports bra for swimming?

Swimming is one of the most popular exercises in England, with over 2.9 million people swimming at least once week. The benefits of wearing a sports bra have been demonstrated for a variety of land-based activities, but we wanted to investigate whether the same benefits were observed during water-based activity, particularly for larger-breasted women.

In this study, led by Dr Chris Mills from the RGBH, six large-breasted women swam breast stroke and front crawl in three different breast support conditions while breast and body movement was recorded. Results demonstrated that more breast movement occurred during front crawl than during breaststroke swimming and that the most movement occurred in the sideward direction during swimming. Overall breast movement was less during swimming than during land-based activities due to the partial support provided by the water. The swimsuit was ineffective at controlling breast movement during either swimming stroke, but the sports bra was effective for both. Aspects of sports bra design could therefore inform the development of swimsuits that are better able to control breast motion during swimming. Women who experience high levels of exercise-induced breast pain may wish to consider swimming as an alternative to land-based exercise due to the reduced level of breast motion that was observed in this study.

Mills, C., Lomax, M., Ayres, B., & Scurr, J. C. (2014). The movement of the trunk and breast during front crawl and breaststroke swimming. *Journal of Sports Sciences*, (September), 1-10.



Swimsuits offer ineffective breast support for female swimmers

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