



ON THE MOVE *Yu Shing Ting*

The Y Helps Seniors With Arthritis

Starting in January, the YMCA will offer a new EnhanceFitness program, an evidence-based group exercise program for older adults, particularly those with arthritis.

“EnhanceFitness is something the Y-USA has been doing for about 10 years, but it’s new for YMCA Honolulu,” says Erin Farmer, YMCA senior director of chronic disease.

Leeward YMCA is just finishing a pilot of the 16-week program this month, and according to Farmer at the midway point, all of the 12 participants had shown improvement in strength and

balance, which are key areas they focus on in the program.

Some of the other changes participants may notice are:

- More energy
- More flexibility and range of motion
- Better sleep
- More feelings of happiness
- Sense of independence

“This program is important because it’s really to have a place in a group that they can network with people who are going through the same thing, almost like a support group, and then relieving the symptoms and also to prevent falls because they’re getting stron-



(Above left) YMCA member Dale Shiga performs a hip-abductor exercise to strengthen the muscles on the side of the hips and thighs that pull your legs out to the side. This helps ease arthritis symptoms and improve everyday activities, like walking. (Above right) YMCA instructor Gail Sakata leads Leeward YMCA EnhanceFitness participants in a “Fist & Fling” activity to improve flexibility of the hands **PHOTOS COURTESY YMCA**

ger,” notes Farmer. “Space is limited to 25 people per cohort, and it’s designed to help those who have arthritis to alleviate a lot of their symptoms.”

According to the YMCA,



EnhanceFitness has been recognized nationally by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Administration on Aging and National

Council on Aging.

The program consists of low-impact exercise classes that are safe and challenging for adults of all fitness levels. It starts Jan. 18 at six YMCA branches — Milil-

ani, Leeward, Kalihi, Nuuanu, Kaimuki and Windward.

Participants meet three days a week for an hour each session and the program runs through April. Cost is \$29 for YMCA members and \$169 for nonmembers (includes a four-month membership to the YMCA).

YMCA also is hosting an open house Jan. 9 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., with free demonstrations, fitness classes and program information. For more details, email HealthPrograms@ymcahonolulu.org.

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