

# Physical Training Pays Off

by Cindy Asch-Martin



When my left leg had to be amputated below the knee on June 27, 2011, my career and the knowledge that went with it came in quite handy.

I had nearly 14 years of experience in keeping myself and others in shape as a certified personal trainer. Therefore, when I lost my leg, I already knew how to take care of my body – with an understanding and willingness that has been very important to my ability to succeed as an individual with limb loss.

## Proving it

After my leg was amputated, the hospital's physical therapist said they needed to teach me how to walk because my body was no longer in balance. I couldn't help but laugh. I explained that I was a certified personal trainer and that is what I do for a living. The therapist smiled and said, "Prove it," so I got my walker and we walked around the entire hospital floor. Once we returned to my room, the therapist agreed – they realized I would be just fine. I was very thankful that my primary focus was on stability exercises. I knew that it was the best form of exercise because it strengthens the entire body; it made my recovery seem effortless.

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My only downtime was a few days after surgery. I knew I needed to get back to the gym and back to work, doing what I love best – helping others.

## Continuing to improve

I use my wheelchair, crutches or a rowing machine for my cardiovascular exercise. You can always start with a few things at your home; you just have to decide to start somewhere. Moving your body and working out is so important. Not only is it paramount for our bodies to be healthy, but it is also necessary to keep our mind and attitudes positive. I know it's natural to feel self-conscious with the new "You," but sitting and feeling sorry for yourself has never proven to be helpful.

No one plans to lose a limb for whatever reason, but we have to go on and tackle every challenge that comes our way. Never say never! 🌀

Photos provided by Cindy Asch-Martin.