

Health by Winter Swimming

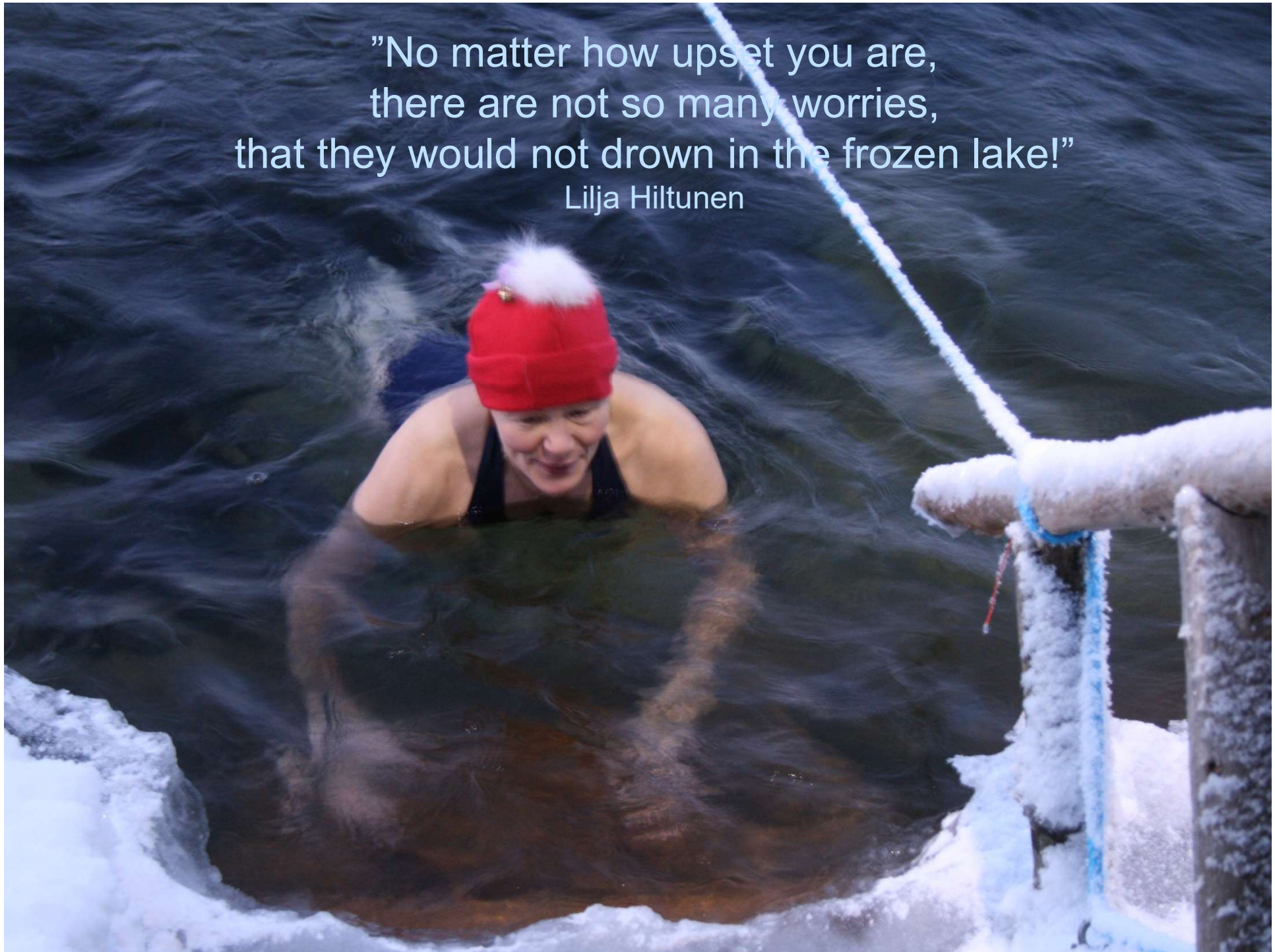




Winter swimming gives you a great pleasure
And may cause positive dependency.

”No matter how upset you are,
there are not so many worries,
that they would not drown in the frozen lake!”

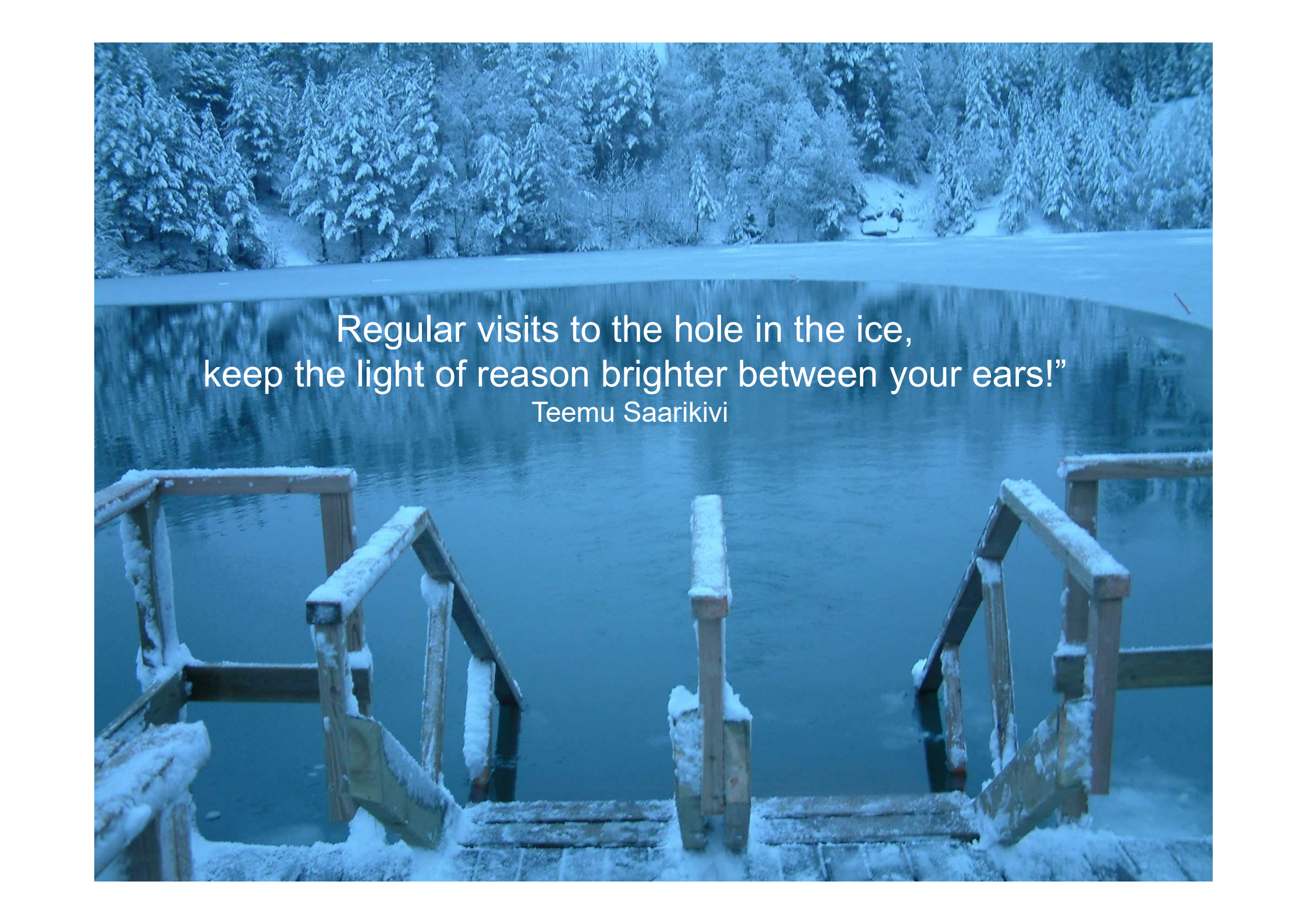
Lilja Hiltunen



“I laugh to myself often,
as without thinking, after swimming in the cold water
I start humming a tune.
I have been in good health,
and I have not been absent from work due to flu.”

Lea Hatala



A photograph of a winter landscape. In the foreground, a wooden staircase with railings leads down to a hole in the ice of a lake. The water is dark and still, reflecting the surrounding environment. The background is filled with a dense forest of evergreen trees, all heavily covered in snow. The sky is overcast and grey. The overall scene is serene and quiet.

Regular visits to the hole in the ice,
keep the light of reason brighter between your ears!”
Teemu Saarikivi

” Whenever I have been
out to the ice-hole,
I sleep very well!”
Verner Pouttu



I started the winter swimming
tempted by a friend.
My initial feeling was
- To get out of the hole in a flash,
but after the plunge
the good feeling is
awesome! ”

Pekka Parpala



Contents

- What is winter swimming?
- Equipment
- Health effects
- Winter Swimming Places
- Winter Swimmer's instructions
- Leisure and competitive activities
- Training and Events



Winter swimming

Is a popular health exercise, which can be practiced in especially dedicated winter swimming places or in any safe wild waters familiar to you.

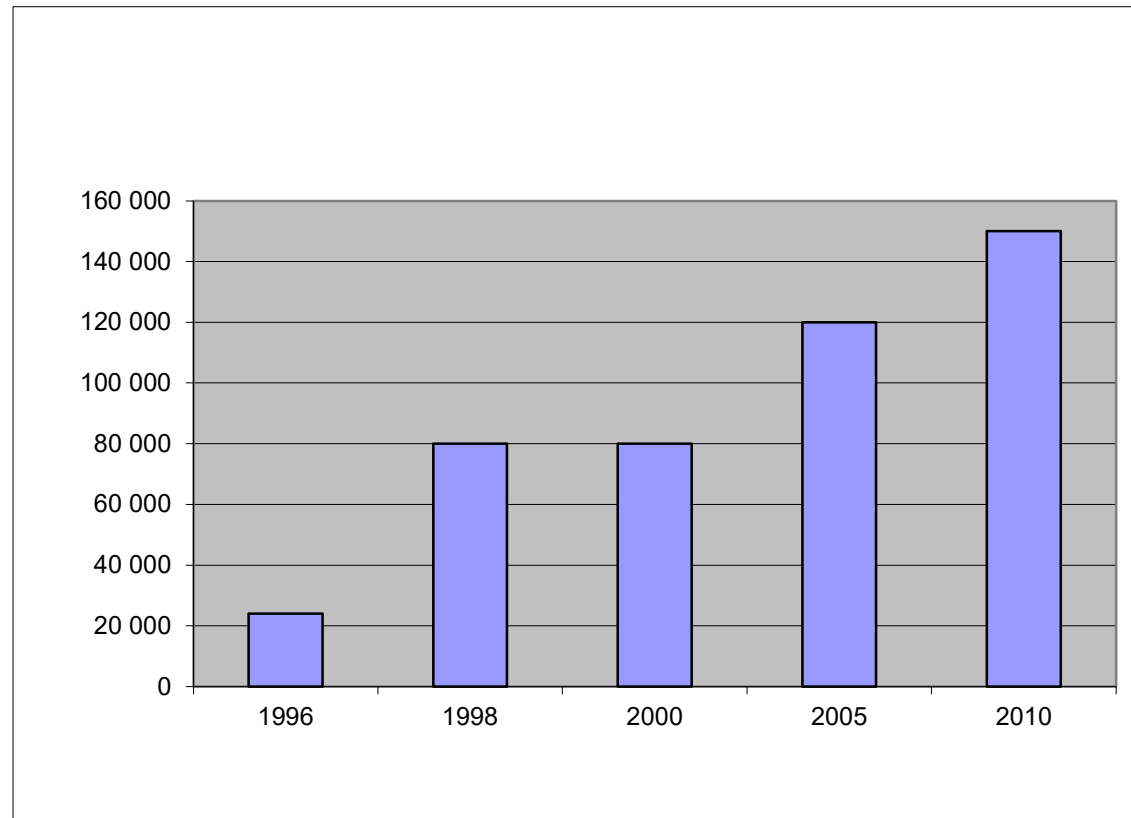
Low-threshold exercise



Kuva: Antero Aaltonen

- Easy to start
- Affordable
- It does not take a lot of time
- You can go swimming at any time

Numbers of Winter Swimming enthusiasts



TNS -gallup 2010



Winter Swimming suits:



Kuva: Antero Aaltonen

- Young people
- Students
- Adults
- Seniors

Winter swimming is suitable for almost everyone!

If in doubt, consult your doctor first.

Also children may experience winter swimming accompanied by an adult



Equipment



Kuva: Antero Aaltonen

- Swimwear
- Winter swimming shoes and gloves
- Warm hat
- A warm drink after swimming

Cold is good for ...

- Producing pleasure when the pituitary gland releases beta-endorphin
- Improving sleep as the blood vessels release serotonin
- Increasing resistance as the immune system is activated
- Improving tolerance to stress and enhancing muscle recovery (cortisol)
- Making your body to burn fat more efficiently



Both for the body and the mind ...



Kuva: Antero Aaltonen

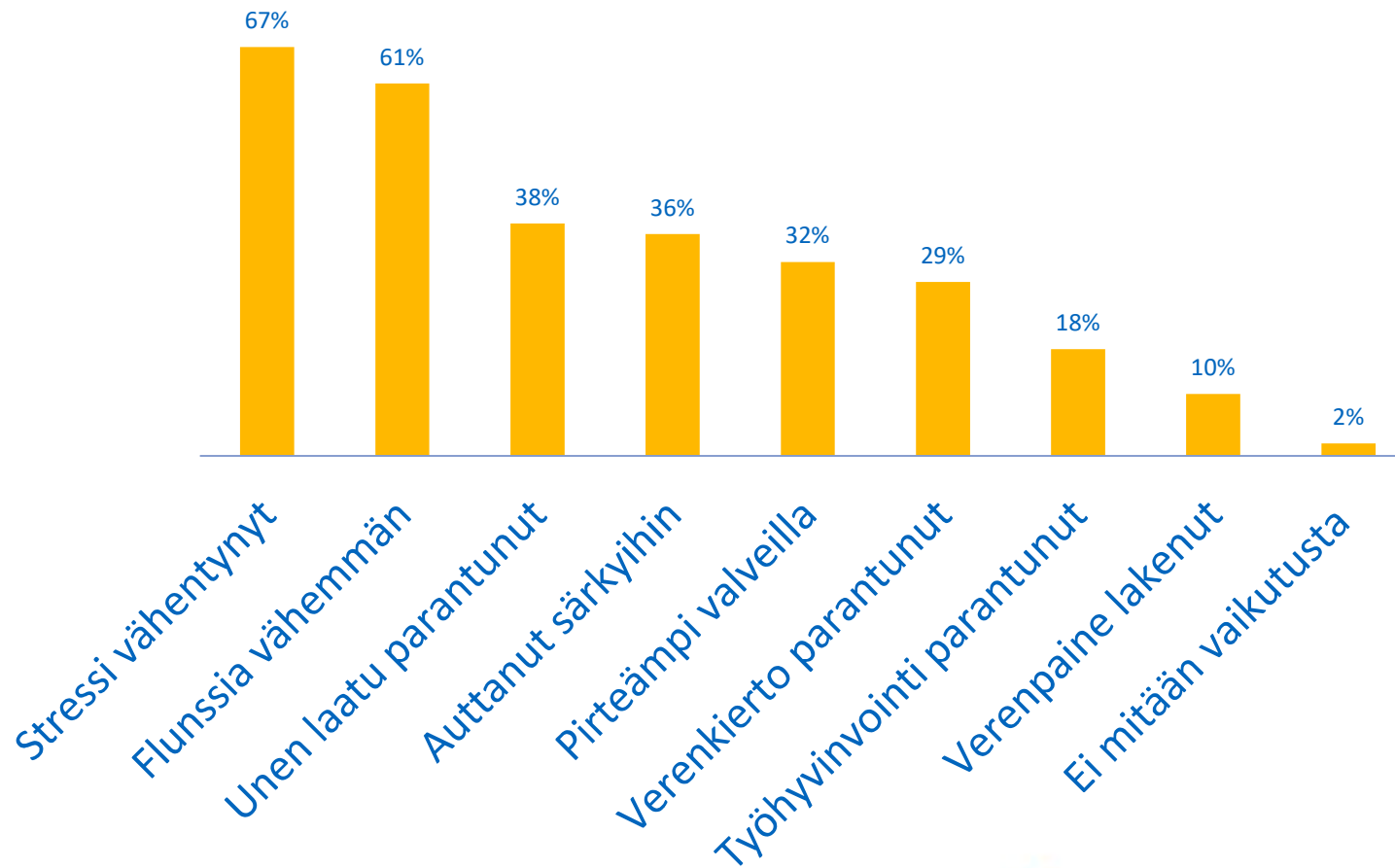
8.10.2020

- It relieves arthritis and asthma symptoms when the pituitary gland releases a hormone called ACTH
- It eases muscle and joint inflammation by increasing blood circulation in them
- Strengthens the heart muscle and blood circulation in general
- Decreases blood pressure? (Pirkko Huttunen research)
- Stimulates the metabolism:
 - Adrenal gland excretes adrenaline and cortisol
 - Blood circulation is strengthened



Winter Swimming health effects

Suomen Latu winter swimming Research 2010
968 Questionnaires answered



Reduced stress
Less colds
Improved sleep quality
Reduced aches
Feeling more vibrant and alive while awake
Improved cardiovascular circulation
Improved occupational fitness
Decreased blood pressure
No health effects



But why a cold bath?

For young and working age people

- more strength to everyday life

For people with menopause

- eases feelings of hot flushes

For people suffering rheumatism

- reduces pain

For mood swings when feeling melancholic and depressed

- improves your mood

For athletes

- facilitates recovery after hard performances



Kuva: Seppo Arvio



Regularity is important

Kuva: Antero Aaltonen

To retain the positive health effects regularity is required.

You need to swim 2-3 times a week!



Winter Swimming Places

- Winter Swimming Places are maintained by municipalities or associations
- Ice holes are held open generally by creating a current
- Piers and access routes to the hole in the ice are often covered with heat mats and safety is a subject of special attention
- See your nearest winter swimming places on our website:
- www.suomenlatu.fi/talviuinti



Kuva: Jukka Rantala

Winter Swimmer's instructions

1. Warm up your muscles well before entering the water
2. If you go to the sauna before your swim, let your body cool down before swimming
3. Move calmly as walkways and stairs can be slippery
4. Do not jump head first into the cold water
5. Breathe calmly when entering the water
6. Cold water can cause you to be out of breath for a short while, this is normal
7. Start with just a dip, then extend the time of bathing according to your own feeling
8. Keep your body warm after swimming, and drink plenty of warm drinks (not hot)
9. Do not swim under the influence of alcohol, or while ill
10. Bring a friend along
11. Bring along also swimming shoes and a warm swim hat
12. If in doubt about effects on your health, talk to your doctor



Do not be alarmed if



Kuva: Antero Aaltonen

- The water is cold
- Your heart rate accelerates
- Your fingers tingle
- If you feel dizzy
- Red patches appear on your skin

Because ...

it is quite normal!



Listen to your body



Kuva: Ville Sihvonen

Individual choices:

- Duration of the plunge
- Number of swims
- With or without sauna

You will feel a sense of pleasure already with a quick dip in the cold water!



Winter Swimming as a hobby

- About 150 000 Finns practise winter swimming
- Local clubs organize a variety of activities such as winter swimming season opening ceremonies on the third Saturday of October.
- Winter Swimming enthusiasts and competitors gather to Finnish Championships annually and to World Championships biannually.
- There are winter swimmers also in different parts of Europe such as in Russia, England, Latvia, and Slovakia.



Kuva: Mariia Yrjö-Koskinen

Finnish Winter Swimming Championships

One of Finland's biggest outdoor winter sport events running yearly since 1989



Kuva: Mariia Yrjö-Koskinen

- Carnival atmosphere in good company
- Racing Series by age
 - ✓ 25 m breaststroke
 - ✓ 4 x 25 m relay
- Hobby Swimming Series
 - ✓ 25 m without timing
 - ✓ dips by beginners



Training and Events



Kuva: Antero Aaltonen

- Health by winter swimming Lecture (1-2 h)
- Winter Swimming instructor course (8 hours)
- Winter swimming season opening in October
- Kiilopää winter swimming week in November



Regular physical activity

- Reduces disease
- Improves the ability to work
- Better quality for longer life
- Helps to manage work-related stress
- Increases relaxation
- Reduces insomnia and contributes to restful sleep
- Improves self-esteem and life management



Kuva: Antero Aaltonen

” Confederation of outdoor activities associations”

- Acting locally and nationally
- 185 member associations with 88 000 members
- Member Associations from Hanko to Muonio
- Established 1938
- Head office in Helsinki
- 50 employees



Health by Winter Swimming

www.suomenlatu.fi/talviuinti

