

# He's Regaining Freedom

Henry Sadler—Resident at Blakehurst since 2009

**M**r. Sadler never used to exercise. But when he moved to Blakehurst in 2009, his decision to start taking group fitness classes and using the pool proved valuable to overcome health challenges that were just around the corner.

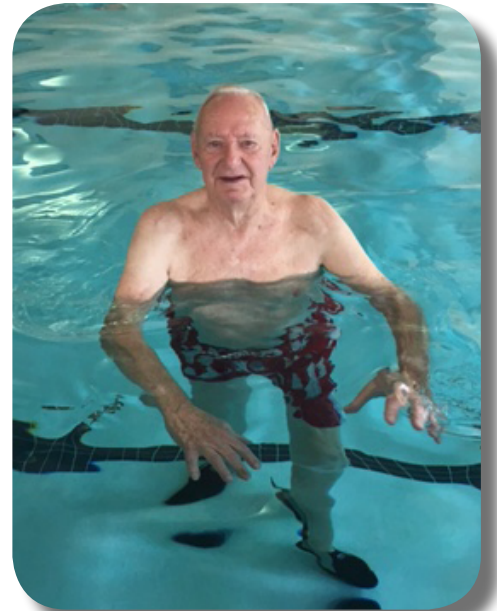
Three years after moving in and well after exercise had become a habit, Mr. Sadler had a knee replacement which eventually became infected. After significant medical consultation, Mr. Sadler had the replacement removed and replaced with surgical concrete. Unfortunately, that "fix" left him unable to walk with minimal movement at the knee. In addition to the mobility challenges, he had lost a lot of healthy muscle.

When Mr. Sadler was released from physical therapy, he was only able to get around by scooter or wheelchair, and he had to stop attending a much loved family vacation at the beach in New Jersey. He missed regular exercise, so he started working with NIFS manager, Kimberlee, to figure out ways he could still be active. She introduced him to the Nustep and with some creative techniques, she was able to provide options for him to press his heel into the pedal so that he could get a feel for the movement that he wasn't able to replicate because he couldn't walk. Once his incisions healed, she also helped him start moving more in the pool.

It was in the water that she helped Mr. Sadler take some serious strides to improving his mobility and his balance. He started with a support to help him maintain his balance and began regular tandem and heels down walking. Within a few months Mr. Sadler was able to walk short distances with a walker, and transitioned to the water aerobics class. Unfortunately, he suffered another infection, and was unable to bear weight or use the pool for three months. Once he was given clearance again from his doctor, he resumed the same aquatic prescription that was designed for him and began working again on building strength and balance.

One month after that second setback Mr. Sadler was back up and walking again. Now, he does water exercise every day for an hour along with a variety of other land-based exercise to help his strength, balance, and flexibility. At 87 years young, he's back to driving, he walks confidently with a walker, and in 2015 he was able to start enjoying his coveted family vacation again.

When we asked him how the NIFS staff and the exercise program at Blakehurst had impacted his life, he quickly shared, "I'm as active as I used to be, and I get to enjoy time with my family. They have a lot of activities here, and you can't participate in everything, but I credit the exercise program for the reason I'm still so active at age 87. I get around my apartment without assistance and outside of there, I do whatever I want to do."



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