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According to Glenn Cheddie, Managing Director & Commercial and Recreational diving instructor of Underwater Works INC. LTD, the sport of scuba diving has become a form of fitness over the past five years.

Scuba diving is essentially the next stage of swimming. Swimmers wishing to take up this sport do not have to be a professional swimmer, but they must possess the basics or the A, B, C's of swimming.

Scuba diving can help keep a person fit in several ways. Firstly there is mastering the challenge of cutting through the power of the tides and resistance of the massive body of water. Because of this, the diver's legs and arms are in constant motion, and working against the force of the water - a sort of resistance exercise - thus the potential for muscle building and toning.

Swimming, which is an overall exercise, helps in maintaining ideal fitness levels, as it affects the whole body. As controlled breathing is one of the key components of diving, individuals in this sport should know that smoking and drinking can be detrimental.

Cheddie highlighted that there are a lot of people in Trinidad and Tobago, who are finding their true passion in the sport of diving and the sport is increasing in popularity. He revealed that more females are getting involved in the sport.

"For every 10 persons starting scuba diving, four of those are females" stated Cheddie.

Cheddie, who is also a Scuba Diver Medic, admits though, that to be a good scuba diver one must first have an adequate level of physical fitness, and that some other means of fitness must be done alongside the diving to help build and maintain strength and stamina. Naturally, he recommends swimming as the first choice of exercise for the sport, but also highlights what other sports can help.

"If persons are unable to maintain a swimming schedule, then running is another beneficial way of keeping fit, both for their personal fitness and for the sport," he advises.

He explained why running or swimming is important to being a scuba diver.

"Running or swimming helps to control a person's breathing patterns, which is necessary for diving. In the sport, diving tanks carrying oxygen are involved so that the diver can breathe underwater. Individuals who are not fit and cannot control their breathing properly, would breathe

air faster than usual and would not be able to stay underwater as long as they would like," Cheddi said.

He gave a few additional tips to would-be scuba divers.

"Besides being fit, one's diet should also be taken into consideration. Everyday foods that are unhealthy for consumption can prevent persons from taking part in this sport," he stressed.

He also noted that individuals suffering from high cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes and illnesses of these natures, must seek medical advice before beginning scuba diving.