

Aquatic Therapy

Aquatic therapy can be an integral part of the recovery process during physical therapy. It has been shown to provide relief of symptoms for a variety of arthritic and musculoskeletal injuries. These may include patients with chronic pain, joint replacements, fibromyalgia, back pain or general orthopedic injury. Many physicians agree that aquatic therapy is one of the best forms of therapy for patients suffering from these problems. Exercise performed in warm water is relatively stress free because the buoyancy from the water may reduce body weight by 90%. Water decreases the stress and impact that is placed upon the joints in the body.

By having a patient perform therapeutic exercise in the warm water they can improve range of motion, strength, balance, and overall function while reducing the amount of pain a he or she may endure. Aquatic therapy may be used as an early intervention to regain motion and function, as well as in later stages of the rehabilitation process to further challenge a high level patient.

Aquatic therapy will allow a person to put weight on an injured leg much quicker. By putting the patient in the pool and removing the majority of the body weight (due to the buoyancy) the patient will be able to regain normal walking mechanics much earlier in the rehabilitation process. This will lead to a quicker recovery from the injury and a faster return to function, work and/or sport. Without the use of aquatic therapy this same patient may not regain normal walking mechanics for a few weeks, and may develop some poor compensatory mechanics when walking.

Physical therapists that use aquatic therapy are not only knowledgeable about how the body works, but understand the benefits and proper exercises which should be conducted during aquatic therapy. An aquatic therapy program in warm water can lead to better circulation, motion, strength and overall conditioning in ones body.

