



Aquatic Therapy

Aquatic therapy has many advantages over land exercises. It increases mobility, muscle strength, body awareness, relaxation and cardiovascular endurance, and improves coordination, balance and respiration. It also decreases the frequency of muscle spasms and pain. Aquatic therapy is especially effective for patients after surgery or injury because it allows for earlier weight-bearing activities which lead to less pain and a faster recovery.

Integral to the effectiveness of aquatic therapy is the properties of water which make this so unique:

- *Buoyancy* – A person submerged to their neck weighs one-tenth of regular body weight, allowing for increased mobility and reducing joint stress.
- *Hydrostatic Pressure* – This reduces the swelling of joints and tissues, and is particularly important for minimizing the pain of chronic joint or muscle conditions from recent injuries.
- *Water Surface Tension* – This creates resistance for limbs partially submerged, allowing the patient to gradually strengthen weak muscles.
- *Resistance* – Water increases resistance against movement by 600 to 700 times that of air, which increases the potential for muscle strengthening.

Experienced Staff

Aquatic therapists are physical and occupational therapists with special post-degree training in the unique properties of aquatic therapy. All aquatic therapy staff have completed a minimum number of courses that focus exclusively on aquatic therapy.

Individualized Treatment

We provide care for patients with the following conditions:

- sprains
- strains
- contusions
- tendonitis
- bursitis
- fractures
- arthritis
- pre-operative
- post-operative pain
- reflex sympathetic dystrophy
- proprioceptive deficits
- degenerative diseases
- low endurance
- neurological conditions

continued





Comprehensive Care Provided

Aquatic therapists work one-on-one to provide a rehabilitation program individualized for:

Balance Problems

- *Multiple Sclerosis* – To aid a patient in maintaining and possibly improving their strength and muscle control.
- *Post Brain Attack (Stroke) Care* – To help a patient regain basic life skills and lost function.
- *Prolonged Immobilization* – To assist a patient in relearning balance and control after a prolonged period of inactivity or immobilization.

Post Surgical Rehabilitation

- *Post Hip Fracture* – Allows the patient to work on building and strengthening techniques in a controlled weight environment.
- *Post Knee Injury Surgery* – Reduces swelling and ideal for working on range of motion exercises.
- *Post Shoulder Surgery* – Provides resistance for building strength and range of motion.
- *Post Spine Surgery* – Allows a patient to build up to full weight-bearing exercises by providing an environment where the patient experiences only 10% of their actual body weight.

Fibromyalgia/Arthritis

- *Exercise Program* – Controlled environment helps alleviate the constant, chronic pain associated with this condition and encourages activity to counter degeneration caused by inactivity.

General Deconditioning

- Assists patient in regaining strength in an environment where the person's body weight is minimized as gravity is countered by the person's buoyancy.

Community Programs

Aurora Rehabilitation Centers at St. Luke's New Berlin and West Allis Memorial Hospital offer an "open" pool program, available for either post-therapy or community participants. For a private fee, participants may have access to the pool and equipment, to continue their established exercise program or begin a new program.

Convenient Location

With multiple sites conveniently located throughout southeastern Wisconsin, please visit our website at www.Aurora.org/Rehab or call toll free **1-888-863-5502** for services nearest you. Referral sites available throughout the Aurora Health Care System.