



The Sibley Report

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... the place to find valuable information to help make your job – and your life easier! If you have a topic idea or any other suggestions, please give our Editor - Angie Catenaro - a call. *Sibley & Associates is a national disability management firm with a decade of experience, 165 plus healthcare professionals and state-of-the-art technology. Our customers benefit from all the advantages a large company has to offer... while also benefiting from the "small business" customer service philosophy of our dedicated Insurance Services Division.*

Sibley

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Water (Aquatic) Therapy Represents an Ocean of Opportunity Why Not Catch the Wave?....

Regardless of the health status or degree of disability of an individual, an appropriate aquatic program can be developed, making water therapy very beneficial.

Water provides buoyancy, which significantly reduces impact, enabling people with physical limitations to exercise in ways that would be impossible on land. Since the body loses approximately 90% of its weight due to the buoyancy of water, muscles can be strengthened, cardiovascular efficiency improved, body fat decreased and flexibility increased without wear and tear on muscles and joints. Exercises like swimming involve a horizontal plane and are very different from exercises used in aquatic therapy that involve a vertical plane. Because body fat floats, patients must learn to defy their body's natural buoyancy by utilizing their muscles to stabilize their posture.

There is no doubt that water exercise is a valuable component of a functional fitness program, benefiting clients in the following ways:

- water allows greater range of motion with less muscular movement and less pain.
- circulation and blood supply to the muscles significantly increases in the water, improving oxygen delivery to the muscles.

- water exercise constantly trains the stabilizers (abdominal, lower back and trunk muscles) by adding resistance against postural muscles.
- cardiac volume increases 27%-30% when the chest is immersed in water that stretches the myocardium (heart muscle).
- decreased compression of the joints and tissues because of the stability and suspension that the water provides.

In addition to improving an individual's physical ability, aquatic programs also greatly enhance the individual's emotional well being. With a focus on ability - what an individual can do - as opposed to disability and what he/she is not able to do, and the fact that differences between individuals are less apparent in the water, both help enhance self esteem. Aquatic programs also require no special equipment...just a warm pool (preferably 88-94 degrees Fahrenheit) and proper instruction.

So why not take the plunge? Water Therapy might be just what your client needs!

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