

Hydrotherapy

Patient Information

MSK Therapy Department

Author ID: SH
Leaflet Ref: Phy 028
Version: 6
Leaflet title: Hydrotherapy
Last review: June 2021
Expiry Date: June 2023

What is hydrotherapy?

Hydrotherapy, or Aquatic Therapy, may be recommended as part of your rehabilitation programme following your assessment by the physiotherapist.

Hydrotherapy involves undertaking exercises and specific physiotherapy techniques in warm water to help relieve pain, relax and strengthen muscles, increase circulation, and consequently improve function. Hydrotherapy also allows adults who have limited mobility to maximise their functional ability within the water.

The water is heated to a temperature between 33 and 35 degrees centigrade. The hydrotherapy unit has individual changing facilities and steps, or a hoist, to get in and out of the water.

It is important to attend hydrotherapy sessions on a regular basis to gain the best effects. If you cannot attend regularly please let your therapist know. The course may last from a few sessions to a few weeks depending on the individual needs of each patient. It may be used alongside other physiotherapy treatments depending on the condition being treated.

What is it used for?

Physiotherapists use aquatic therapy to treat a wide variety of symptoms and conditions. These can include conditions such as chronic pain and long-standing musculoskeletal conditions, arthritis, soft tissue injuries, fractures, back pain and post-surgery as part of a wider rehabilitation programme.

How effective is it?

Research studies have shown that hydrotherapy is effective for certain conditions.

Why is hydrotherapy being offered to me?

Your physiotherapist will offer it only if it is appropriate and following a detailed assessment of your medical history.

How is it carried out?

The hydrotherapy pool is a self-contained area in the Therapy Department at Wrightington Hospital. You will be offered a session time to attend following your initial assessment. It is important to be able to attend all the sessions offered to gain maximum benefit.

Please try to eat a couple of hours before your hydrotherapy session as this will reduce the chance of dizziness or fainting.

You are expected to shower before and after entering the pool. You will then spend approximately 20 - 30 minutes in the pool. The first session may be shorter depending on how your body responds to treatment.

You will be issued exercises to perform depending on your needs.

What happens afterwards?

You may feel relief after the first treatment. The number of treatments required varies for each person and depends on the condition being treated.

The heat may make you feel tired. If you feel drowsy it is not advisable to drive or operate machinery. You may sit in the waiting area until it eases off or bring someone with you to drive you home. A rest period and a drink will allow your body temperature to stabilise.

In order to maintain a clean, safe and hygienic environment for all patients and staff we ask that you read and comply with the following.

You must:

- Report any changes in your general health to the physiotherapist/assistant before using the pool.
- Report any infections or open wounds to the physiotherapist/assistant before using the pool.
- Remove socks and shoes before walking on the tiled area around the pool. If this is a problem, please ask a member of staff for assistance.
- Tie up long hair or use a shower cap or swimming cap.
- Bring your own close fitting swimming costume or swim shorts and a towel. Ordinary cotton shorts are not advisable.
- Shower thoroughly in the pool shower before and after using the pool.
- Use a zimmer frame when walking around the poolside area if you normally use sticks or crutches. These are available in the hydrotherapy unit.
- Have a drink after using the pool and sit for a few minutes to allow your body to adjust to room temperature.
- Inform a member of staff if you feel unwell whilst in the water. If you become seriously ill whilst in the pool, you will be taken from the pool on a spinal board.

You must not:

- Walk barefoot in the department if you have a verruca or suspect you have one. Please ask a staff member for advice regarding a verruca sock or wearing suitable pool side footwear.
- Enter the pool without a minimum of 2 physiotherapy staff members being present.
- Use talcum powder in the changing cubicles.
- Use shampoo or shower gel in the unit showers as these can make the floor slippery. (Ordinary soap is ok).
- Use creams, moisturisers or lotions etc. on your skin prior to attending your session as these can leave a fatty, slippery residue on the water.

Appointment information

Please book in at the reception desk in the Therapy Department when you arrive. You will then be taken down to the Hydrotherapy Unit by a member of staff.

- The maximum time you should spend in the pool is 30 minutes. You should have completed your exercises within this time.
- In some instances, following early morning pool water testing, it may be necessary to cancel your session at short notice. We apologise in advance for any inconvenience that this may cause. Please ensure that the contact number we have for you is up to date.

If you are unable to attend for your session, please inform the physiotherapy department on telephone 01257 256305.

- If you are unable to regularly attend your allocated sessions, please inform your physiotherapist as it may be better to delay starting the sessions until you are able to do so.
- If you have missed an appointment or did not attend your session without contacting the Therapy Department, please ring to check pool availability for your next session.
- After your session, please book your next appointment with the reception staff.
- Once you have completed your course of hydrotherapy you may have a review assessment booked with your referring physiotherapist.
- After completing your course of treatment you can continue to exercise at your local swimming pool to help maintain the benefit.

Contact

Wrightington Physiotherapy Department: **Telephone 01257 256305**

Your Physiotherapist is:

Reference

ATACP (Aquatic Therapy Association of Chartered Physiotherapists)
Guidance on Good Practice in Aquatic Physiotherapy; 2015

Comments, Compliments or Complaints

The Patient Relations/Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) Department provides confidential on the spot advice, information and support to patients, relatives, friends and carers.

Contact Us

Tel: 01942 822376 (Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm)

The Patient Relations/PALS Manager
Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Royal Albert Edward Infirmary
Wigan Lane
Wigan WN1 2NN

Ask 3 Questions

Become more involved in decisions about your healthcare. You may be asked to make choices about your treatment. To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions:

1. What are my options?
2. What are the pros and cons of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?



How We Use Your Information

For details on how we collect, use and store the information we hold about you, please take a look at our “how we use your information” leaflet which can be found on the Trust website: <https://www.wwl.nhs.uk>

This leaflet is also available in audio, large print, Braille and other languages upon request. For more information please ask in the department/ward.

© Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
All rights reserved. Not to be reproduced in whole or in part without the permission of the copyright owner.

Call 111 first when it's less urgent than 999.



EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME

SILVER AWARD

Proudly supporting those who serve.

Phone: 0808 802 1212

Text: 81212

www.veteransgateway.org.uk

