

Group Aquatic Physiotherapy Sessions Information for Hydrotherapy Pool Users

What is Aquatic Physiotherapy?

Aquatic Physiotherapy is an individualised Physiotherapy program that you do in a Hydrotherapy pool. A physiotherapist will guide you and adjust the exercise to your individual needs.

The **hydrotherapy pool** temperature is salt water/chlorinated and kept close to 34 degrees Celsius (34°C). This temperature promotes pain relief, decreases stiffness for many conditions and can help improve your function.

What is the Aquatic Physiotherapy program?

Your Doctor or Physiotherapist can refer you for aquatic physiotherapy. Your **initial Physiotherapy Pool assessment** sets up your goals and records your current ability before you start your program. This is done by your referring Physiotherapist or Canberra Hospital Physiotherapists.

You also need a **medical clearance**, completed by the Physiotherapist or Doctor before you start. This can be done at your initial assessment or may need to be sent to your GP or referring Doctor to be completed.

The aquatic program is a **short term (6 week) program** that provides you with an individual pool exercise plan that you do in a group session.

On completion of your program, the Physiotherapist can also give you advice on options for continuing this treatment.

Toward the end of your program (around 5 weeks), you will need to organise a **review** with your initial Physiotherapist to check progress against your goals. **Please contact the physiotherapist who completed your initial assessment to organise this.**

How do I book or cancel a session at the hydrotherapy pool?

Canberra Hospital Physiotherapy will contact you to book your program. To cancel a session at the hydrotherapy pool, or contact the Physiotherapists about your Aquatic Physiotherapy program, please call **6244 2154**.

If you need to cancel an appointment due to sickness, you may be able to attend an additional “make-up” session if you provide a medical certificate.

If you miss an appointment without a medical certificate, we cannot provide an additional session. If you miss three (3) appointments without letting us know, you may be discharged from the program.

What if I have a health condition?

If any of the following conditions apply to you, please speak immediately with your physiotherapist. These can potentially prevent your entry into the pool:

- fever - a temperature over 38°C
- respiratory virus (e.g. cold or flu)
- skin infection (e.g. dermatitis, tinea, thrush, ear or urinary tract infection)
- gastro-intestinal (stomach) upset
- a contagious condition (e.g. measles, active herpes simplex)
- an open or infected wound or pin site
- an allergy to pool chemicals
- bladder or bowel incontinence
- uncontrolled blood pressure
- indwelling drips or drains (e.g. intravenous line, urinary catheter, PEG tube)
- received radiotherapy within the last six weeks (you will need clearance from radiation oncologist)
- delivered a baby within the last six weeks
- pregnant within the first trimester

Please speak to the physiotherapist if:

- Your condition or circumstances have changed in any way that may affect your pool program or entry into the pool
- If you start to feel unwell at anytime, suffer a skin irritation, or have a significant increase in pain during or after your pool sessions

It is common to feel tired or have slightly more pain after your pool session, however please speak to physiotherapist if you have any concerns.

What do I need to bring with me to the hydrotherapy pool?

- Swimming costume or close-fitting clothing (like a T-shirt and shorts) that can be worn in the water
- Towel
- Footwear you are able to get wet, such as thongs or slip on shoes
- Plastic or metal drink bottle filled with water. (No glass please)

What happens during a hydrotherapy pool session?

1. Please check in with the staff at the pool desk. Inform the staff when you check in if you need the hoist or other assistance to get in and out of the pool.
2. A basket is provided for you to store your clothes. Take a basket and get changed in one of the change rooms. If you require **assistance dressing or undressing**, please bring someone with you to assist.
3. Bring your basket out with you and place it on the shelf.
4. Go to the toilet if needed before your pool session starts.
5. Once you are changed, wait in the poolside chairs. **Do not enter the water until a physiotherapist directs you to.**
6. Once the Physiotherapist calls everyone into the pool for your session, rinse off under the pool side shower and then get into the pool.
7. The physiotherapist will guide you through your exercises.
8. After your session, again rinse off under the poolside showers. For safety reasons, we do not allow clients to use the change room showers.
9. Take your basket back to the change room to get dressed into your dry clothes.
10. Have a drink of water after your session and remember to keep hydrated throughout the day. Apply body lotion if you suffer from dry skin
11. Before leaving, check the time of your next appointment.

Hydrotherapy Pool Guidelines

For the safety of all hydrotherapy pool users:

- Do not wear band aids, dressings or bandages in the pool
- If you have long hair, please tie or clip it back or wear a swimming cap
- Do not put your head under the water
- Wear thongs or slip on shoes in the pool area
- To prevent slips, please don't use talcum powder in the bathrooms or change rooms
- **Do not bring valuables or money to the pool. We cannot take responsibility if your valuables go missing**

Infection Control

In the event of pool contamination such as an open wound / bleeding or a bladder or bowel accident, notify pool staff **immediately** and they will advise you when to vacate the pool.

What if there is an emergency?

Pool staff are trained to handle emergency situations such as fire, injury and other medical emergencies. Please do not panic in the event of an emergency. Pool staff will give you instructions to follow and ensure you are safe.

Accessibility

If you have difficulty reading a standard printed document and would like an alternative format, please phone 13 22 81.



If English is not your first language and you need the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS), please call 13 14 50.

For further accessibility information, visit: www.health.act.gov.au/accessibility

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