

# HARRIS REGIONAL HOSPITAL

A Duke LifePoint Hospital

## Aquatic Therapy Patient Information

### Aquatic Physical Therapy Program – frequently asked questions

- **What is Aquatic Therapy?** Skilled physical therapy that occurs in a heated pool (94 degrees) that uses the physical qualities of water to assist in patient progression towards rehabilitation goals. The Harris Sports Medicine and Physical Therapy hydrotherapy pool has an underwater treadmill if needed.
- **Who will be doing the Aquatic Therapy?** You will be receiving one on one treatment by a licensed Physical Therapist or Physical Therapy Assistant in a safe environment.
- **Do I need to know how to swim?** You **do not** need to know how to swim. We want you to have an enjoyable, successful rehabilitation experience. It is common for individuals to have a fear of water. Fear is often overcome by the positive experience of aquatic therapy.
- **How is it billed?** Most insurances will cover aquatic therapy. You are responsible for knowing the coverage of your insurance. Harris Sports Medicine and Physical Therapy will assist you in the process.
- **Do I need a physician order?** – An order is required for physical therapy with most insurances. It may or may not include aquatic physical therapy. Upon the on-land evaluation, the PT will assess the patient to see if he/she is a candidate for aquatic therapy.
- **What do I wear?** A One piece bathing suit or tankini style bathing suit for women, a short style bathing suit for men, T-shirt and shorts if desired, clean water shoes are allowed.
- **What do I need to bring?** A towel (we do NOT provide towels), flip flops or slip on shoes to wear when getting out of the pool, a water bottle, toiletries such as soap and lotion. Lockers are available but we do not provide locks, so it is recommended that you bring a lock to secure your items. We are not liable for your belongings.
- **What time should I arrive for my appointment?** Please arrive 20 minutes early to shower, etc. and be seated pool side at your appointment time.
- **Do I need to shower before entering the pool?** **YES!** Please shower **with soap** before your appointment. You must be able to shower independently or you may bring one caregiver if needed. **DO NOT** apply lotions or oils the day of your appointment. You may want to bring lotion to apply **after** your session is over.
- **How will I enter the pool?** There are 4 steps with a handrail that you must be able to ascend/descend to enter the pool. Your physical therapist will assist you and you may bring one caregiver if needed.
- **Do I need to be able to change clothes independently and will anyone be available to help me if not?** Yes, the therapist will not be able to assist you with showering or changing clothes. If you require help, you must bring a caregiver.

### Your responsibility:

- Please let your therapist know if you have a fever, heart condition, incontinence, seizures, skin sores/rashes/infections, open wounds unable to be covered by bio-occlusive dressing, fear of water, chlorine/bromine sensitivity, diarrhea, vomiting, acute DVT/pulmonary embolism, vertigo, ear infection, or wear ear plugs.
- Do not enter the pool without your therapist present.
- Always exit the pool slowly. Transition to walking out of the water with caution. Take a seat if needed to allow your blood pressure to adjust. One caregiver may be present if you need any physical assistance.
- Report any changes in physical status to your Physical Therapist such as an increase in pain, shortness of breath, chest pain or dizziness.

I have read and understand the patient the aquatic therapy information and my responsibilities:

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Harris Sports Medicine and Physical Therapy 828-293-5174  
3971 Little Savannah Road Cullowhee, NC 28723**