

Water Exercise. Relieve Hip and Knee Pain!

We are very fortunate to have a therapy pool at Lakeview Community Wellness Center, which is perfect for what I am about to tell you.

The joint sparing buoyancy of water allows you to exercise with greater intensity and less pressure on joints than in your home or gym.

Everyone has heard about the benefits of exercise especially for maintaining heart health. When it comes to maintaining and increasing joint flexibility and strength, the knees and hips don't always cooperate.

It is not surprising since exercise puts a lot of extra pressure on your knees and hips (three to seven times your body weight) every time you take a step.

Exercising in water can alleviate that additional stress. Aquatic therapy is beneficial because you can use the water to your advantage. You can make an activity easier or you can make it more challenging just by changing how you do it.

In the simple act of walking in water, the water's buoyancy takes pressure off your joints allowing you to move without the discomfort you might feel walking on land. Less strain on the muscles and joints equals less or no pain to perform the activity. But it is still a great workout.

It has been shown over and over in studies that osteoarthritis patients who participate in a six week aquatic physical therapy program have significantly less pain as well as improved physical function and strength. At least 75% of patients with arthritis who participate in these programs are improved. No one gets worse.

There are several advantages to exercising in water. The reduction in discomfort and pain often can motivate arthritis patients who otherwise might not try exercising.

Also, its easy to combine both cardiovascular and resistance training into one routine. Patients can easily ramp up their exercise routines just by moving more quickly or adding weights or floatation devices to increase resistance.

The water's hydrostatic pressure also promotes improved circulation while its warmth can help alleviate joint stiffness.

It's easy to get a good joint friendly work out in the pool.

We are out of space this week, but I sincerely hope I brought to your attention the benefits of aquatic therapy and we have it right here at the Lakeview Community Wellness Center!

Please come back next week for specific directions on how to build knee and hip strength in water. You know it can help you and next week you can learn how to do it.

All Orthopaedic Surgery problems can be evaluated by Dr. Haverbush at Lakeview Community Wellness Center in Lakeview or at the office in Alma at 315 Warwick Dr., Alma, Michigan. Please call 989-463-6092 to schedule an appointment.

Future Lakeview Community Wellness Center Clinic dates are August 7 and August 22.

And don't forget we will be happy to answer questions from readers. You can e-mail me at orthopodsurgeon@hotmail.com or write to me at 315 Warwick Dr., Alma, Michigan, 48801.

Our goal is simple. To help people return to more pain-free functional lives.

Be well.

Dr. Haverbush