

Ways To Build Strength in the Pool

Now that you realize how much benefit can come to the knees and hips I will tell you how. We are very fortunate to have a perfect therapy pool for these exercises at Lakeview Community Wellness Center.

What we are trying to do is relieve pain and treat the arthritis in the hips or knees or both conservatively. Everyone knows that this will not cure arthritis. But then nothing else will cure it either short of hip or knee replacement, which not everyone wants. Everyone does want to have less pain. This can help a lot of people.

Knees

Flexion and extension. Hold onto side of pool. Stand straight and bend your knees one at a time as if trying to kick your buttocks with your heel. Do this with some force if you are able.

Squats. Stand straight then squat as if you are about to sit in a chair. The buttocks should stick out slightly and your chest should be leaning forward. Relax, you're in the water, no one will see!

Hips

Flexion and extension. For flexion, stand with your back straight, then raise one leg up from the hip until it is straight out in front of you. For extension raise your leg behind you.

Abduction. Stand up straight then kick your leg out to the side, keeping your toes pointed. Be sure you don't lean sideways because it makes the exercise less effective.

These movements combine flexion (bending) and extension (straightening). Aim for 20 to 30 repetitions per exercise. Grasp the edge of the pool for balance if needed.

To increase the intensity of each exercise, add resistance by performing each movement faster, move into shallower water or perform the movements without holding onto the pool's edge.

What else?

Check with your family doctor before starting a water exercise program if you have a condition that would limit the movements you can do in the water.

If you still have significant pain after water exercise see a physical therapist who can tailor a program for you.

When exercising on your own, start with a warm up and end with a cool down such as walking in place.

Pace yourself. Just because the water alleviates stress doesn't mean your muscles won't ache if you push yourself too hard.

Good luck! These exercises have helped so many people, you might as well benefit too.

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 22 and September 5.

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