

Aquatic Therapy Offers the Benefits of Weightlessness

If you find exercise painful or too difficult, you might benefit from the weightlessness of aquatic therapy.

Aquatic therapy is a series of monitored exercises and activities performed in a heated pool under the guidance of a trained physical therapist. Aquatic therapy is especially a good option for people with mobility problems because they are almost weightless in the water. Those with arthritis or a muscular, neurological or other chronic condition, as well as those recovering from surgery or a traumatic injury can also benefit.

“Buoyancy reduces the effects of gravity and decreases compressive forces, making exercises much easier to perform than on land,” said Jennifer K. Soares, PT, DPT, CHT, manager of RWJ Physical Therapy in Scotch Plains. “Water provides a safe and effective method for healing injuries, restoring patient confidence and increasing mobility.”

Aquatic therapy is offered at RWJ Physical Therapy, located at the RWJ Rahway Fitness & Wellness Centers, located in Scotch Plains and Carteret.

At the centers, patients work one-on-one with a physical therapist trained and certified in aquatic therapy. For those in wheelchairs or who have trouble doing stairs, there is a lift to help get in and out of the pool. The therapy pool is warmed to a little over 90 degrees.

Some conditions that aquatic therapy can help include:

Osteoarthritis

Spinal Stenosis

Any orthopedic conditions with weight bearing restrictions

Decreased balance (not related to vertigo)

Post stroke

“People who have trouble walking because of weakness, pain or problems with muscle control or balance often walk freely when they are in the water,” said Claudine Gimblette, physical therapist at the Scotch Plains center. “Aquatic therapy provides freedom of movement.”

RWJ Physical Therapy is located at the RWJ Rahway Fitness & Wellness Center, 2120 Lamberts Mill Road, Scotch Plains. The phone number is 908.389.5400. RWJ Physical therapy in Carteret is located at 60 Cooke Avenue, Carteret. Phone is 732.969.8030. A doctor’s prescription is needed for aquatic therapy.