

Aquatic therapy can benefit conditions related to pregnancy

At Synergy Therapies, expectant mothers are offered a wide range of treatment options that are beneficial in treating common impairments associated with pregnancy. Women dealing with pain, weight gain, diminished fitness levels or recovering from delivery are helped with our approach to aquatic-based physical therapy.

Each patient is evaluated individually and special effort is taken to design a plan of care that recognizes the unique characteristics of pregnancy. At the heart of our plan of care is Phased Progression™, our trademarked system of aquatic therapy. Taking advantage of the healing properties of water and its ability to ease pain and minimize stress on the body, our specially trained therapists develop individualized programs specifically for pregnant women.

Phased Progression™ approach to prenatal/postnatal care

Our prenatal/postnatal plan of care starts with an evaluation that includes awareness of:

- System changes with pregnancy and their affects on treatment interventions
- The patient's trimester and its affect on treatment methods
- Exercise design indications, precautions and contraindications
- Therapeutic interventions for stresses that may be placed on the pelvic floor, nerves, and ligaments
- Borg rating of perceived exertion for maximum cardio benefit

Patient education

- Pregnancy-related body (system) changes and their affect on the patient's health
- Identification of appropriate fitness components
- Education on exercise as it relates to pregnancy, childbirth and recovery



Evaluation

- Each patient's evaluation begins with the recognition of the unique characteristics of pregnancy
- Safe and realistic goals and expectations are set considering her pre-pregnancy level of fitness
- Her therapeutic Plan of Care may include both water and land modalities (Phased Progression™)

Treatment

- Manual Therapy: Soft Tissue Massage/ART, muscle energy, gentle spinal and sacroiliac mobilizations for pain control in side lying or semi-reclined.
- Neuro-muscular Re-education Therapy (water/land): Aerobic conditioning, core strengthening, ROM, joint stabilization techniques, postural, body mechanics

ICD-9 Code	Diagnosis
780.79	General muscle weakness
718.9	Joint laxity
781.3	Lack of coordination
781.92	Abnormal posture
724.6	Sacroiliac pain
353.0	Thoracic outlet syndrome
724.1	Low back pain
719.7	Pain in joint site, unspecified
723.1	Cervicalgia, neck pain



THE EVOLUTION OF PHYSICAL THERAPY

Healing Qualities of Water

Warmth

- Allows for the immediate shunting of blood to all joints and muscles
- Reduces pain and muscle guarding
- Water temperature is thermal neutral: 90–92°F

Buoyancy

- Allows patient to safely move a body part while supporting the rest of the body, decreasing lumbar stress
- Decompresses painful joints to allow safe movement of body parts
- Facilitates abdominal muscle strength and endurance that minimizes diastasis recti and maximizes post partum recovery

Hydrostatic Pressure

- Compresses deeply submerged body parts to increase balance and help reduce edema
- Decreases blood pressure and heart rate during exercise
- Decreases inflammatory pain

Viscosity

- Increases resistance to moving body parts directly proportionate to the person's efforts while increasing strength and conditioning in a safe environment
- Increases caloric expenditure
- Improves awareness of proper posture and movement

"I have a back condition and rheumatoid arthritis. When I began to feel pressure on my sciatic nerve, I could barely move! And now, after aquatic therapy at Synergy Therapies, I'm stronger and more flexible and getting the exercise my doctor recommends. I plan to continue after my baby is born, it's making a big difference in my quality of life."

– Julie Galutia, Synergy Therapies patient

CLINICAL STUDIES

For additional information, or to review clinical studies assessing the benefits of aquatic therapy, visit www.pubmed.gov and enter the title of a study listed below.

Garshasbi A, et al. *The effect of exercise on the intensity of low back pain in pregnant women. Spine.* 2005;30(8):983-91.

Kihlstrand M, et al. *Water-gymnastics reduced the intensity of back/low back pain in pregnant women. Acta Obstet Gynecol Scand.* 1999;7:180-5.

Stuge B, et al. *Physical therapy for pregnancy-related low back and pelvic pain: a systematic review. Acta Obstet Gynecol Scand.* 2003 Nov;82(11):983-90.

Damen L, et al. *Pelvic pain during pregnancy is associated with asymmetric laxity of the sacroiliac joints. Acta Obstet Gynecol Scand.* 2001 Nov;80(11):1019-24.

Sabino J, Grauer J. *Pregnancy and low back pain. Curr Rev Musculoskelet Med.* 2008 June;1(2):137-141.

Commitment to quality

Here at Synergy Therapies, we commit to providing our patients with the highest quality care while creating a safe, caring and supportive environment in our clinic. Throughout a patient's plan of care, we provide the referring physician with detailed progress notes, that allow an assessment of the improvements made during therapy. We value our partnerships with medical professionals and would welcome the opportunity to care for your patients.



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