

## In This Issue

- Back Pain and Aquatic Therapy

### SNCA Mission Statement:

**Our mission is to promote, facilitate and coordinate the sustainability and expansion of aquatic resources within the Truckee Meadows.**

### Contact Us

Leah Bradle,  
Executive Director  
775-997-3004

leah.bradle@sncaquatics.org

www.sncaquatics.org

## Back Pain and Aquatic Therapy

The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) reports that approximately 60 to 80 percent of the North American population will suffer from back pain or a back injury over the course of their lives. The ACSM says one of every five people suffer from chronic back pain lasting six months or longer.

The ACSM also reports that, among individuals under 45 years of age, back pain is the most common cause of "activity limitation" (injuries that linger, requiring repeated doctor's visits and ongoing back pain treatment). An estimated \$30 million is spent each year on doctors' visits for back pain relief, with just three percent of that dollar amount going to back pain prevention.



In a health alert from John Hopkins, they state:

The health benefits of water therapy have been acknowledged throughout history to help treat various ailments, including muscle pain. Today, we also use water therapy to manage various musculoskeletal conditions, including low back pain.

We all know that water benefits us from the "inside out" -- hence the oft cited advice to drink eight glasses of water each day. Water also provides numerous benefits from the "outside in." For instance, working out in water can increase your cardiovascular fitness, improve your flexibility, and help you relax.

Water therapy exercise programs consist of a variety of treatments and exercises and can be specifically designed to provide relief of low back pain or neck pain. These exercises also condition and strengthen muscles to help avoid future problems.

According to Spine-Health.com, water therapy is especially helpful in cases where a land-based exercise program is not possible due to the intensity of pain, decreased bone density, disability or other factors and is particularly good for people with conditions such as:

- Osteoarthritis
- Advanced osteoporosis (with susceptibility to and/or pain from



Find us on  
Facebook!

Click here and  
become a fan today!

#### SNCA Mission Statement:

Our mission is to promote, facilitate and coordinate the sustainability and expansion of aquatic resources within the Truckee Meadows.

#### Contact Us

Leah Bradle,  
Executive Director  
775-997-3004

[leah.bradle@sncaquatics.org](mailto:leah.bradle@sncaquatics.org)

[www.sncaquatics.org](http://www.sncaquatics.org)

fracture)

- Muscle strain or tears

In addition to these conditions, water therapy is recommended as a form of exercise therapy to treat those with diabetes, as well as those with high blood pressure.

Also according to Spine-Health.com, the physical properties of water make it a highly desirable medium in which to exercise to treat back pain and other musculoskeletal injuries. As John Hopkins states, some of the most valuable properties of water therapy for back pain are as follows:

- **Stabilize your lower back.** Water naturally resists when you move. Exercising against this resistance, with the right pushing or pulling motions, gently develops muscle strength in your back, abdomen, and hips. When you target these core muscles, you help stabilize your posture and support your lower back. The deeper you immerse your body, the greater the resistance and the more challenging the water workout will be.
- **Minimize pressure on your spine, joints, and muscles.** Because water is buoyant, it supports your weight, thereby minimizing the pressure placed on your spine, joints, and muscles. This results in a number of benefits. First, the reduced stress can help alleviate pain and decrease the chances of further aggravating your back. Second, you can move through the water with relative ease, which enables you to stretch your back muscles and improve your range of motion. Third, you're able to perform movements in water that may be too difficult or painful to carry out on a hard surface during land-based exercises.
- **Soothe and relax your muscles.** Even without exercising, being in warm water—as is generally recommended for people recovering from a back injury— can relieve pain, reduce swelling, and relax your back muscles. In addition, the soothing, warm water environment may motivate you to exercise more consistently and, in turn, enable you to achieve better results from your exercise routine.

It is SNCA's hope to create and maintain facilities in which aquatic therapy is attainable for all members of our community. Whether it is for back pain or another condition, access to warm water therapy can be instrumental in recovery and prevention.