



Scott Miller, director of rehabilitation for Parker Adventist Hospital

in the SWIM of things

aquatic therapy can help speed up the process of rehabilitation after joint replacement

by *olivia mayer*

If you have had your knee or hip replaced, you know the road to recovery requires several weeks of fairly intensive physical therapy following surgery. What you may not expect is to be donning a swimsuit to do it. But that's exactly what many rehab patients at Parker Adventist Center for Rehabilitation and Sports Medicine are finding.

Last fall, the outpatient center adjacent to the hospital opened its 4,700-square-foot facility that features a SwimEx pool. The 4-foot-deep pool with an adjustable current is identical to the one used by area professional athletes and has added a whole new dimension to the rehab program at Parker Adventist Hospital.

"Aquatics therapy allows us to be a little more progressive with all types of injuries more than we normally would be on land," says Scott Miller, director of rehabilitation for Parker Adventist Hospital. "You can really speed up the whole process, plus you can treat a wide range of diagnoses."

Because water takes the weight-bearing component out of the equation, patients can begin exercising sooner. They can also use the buoyancy of the water to facilitate movement. Additionally, aqua therapy can improve circulation and relax or loosen stiff muscles.

“The patients aren’t afraid of falling and it enables someone who is very weak to be successful in an exercise program,” says Marty Euwema, lead outpatient therapist and head of the aquatics program. “It has had a real positive impact on our patients.”

road to recovery

Aquatic therapy is just one of a multitude of comprehensive services provided by the center, which is the only outpatient rehabilitation facility in the Parker area to offer all three rehabilitation specialties—physical, occupational and speech therapy.

As such, the staff of more than 26 licensed therapists are able to address a wide array of needs from general pain management to helping injured “weekend warriors” and high-school athletes get back on their feet. The center also helps patients suffering from debilitating conditions or diseases, such as stroke or Parkinson’s Disease, relearn the basic skills of daily living.

Because the center incorporates all three specialties, they can treat the gamut of conditions. Among their specialty programs are hand therapy, which is employed, for example, in the case of carpal tunnel syndrome or post tendon repair. Other areas of expertise include neurological rehabilitation or sports medicine, which may be required after a spill on the slopes, work injury rehab, low-vision therapy and swallowing therapy.

Patients are referred by their doctors, and the center accepts payment from nearly all insurance companies. The process begins with a comprehensive evaluation. Based on

the evaluation, the plan may include a combination of land and water-based approaches.

In every case, the patient is assigned his or her own therapist. “That personalized, one-on-one care sets us apart,” Miller says of the center that has achieved a 97 percent satisfaction rating from its patients who cite the delivery of personal, professional care and outstanding customer service.



Marty Euwema, lead outpatient therapist and head of the aquatics program

suit up

Are you in need of rehabilitation? To learn more about aquatics therapy at Parker Adventist Center for Rehabilitation and Sports Medicine, call **303-269-4000**.

call

getting the most out of life

Tandy Ortiz, a retired physical education teacher, suffered from severe jaw pain and recurring headaches after more than 25 years of instruction in large gyms and fields. That pain led her to seek the expertise at the center. After several rehab sessions, she is nearly pain-free.

“Pain can wear a person out,” says Ortiz, 54, who is active in many sports. “It is great to feel good again.”

That’s essentially the goal of any rehabilitation program—helping the patient “regain function to normal activities of daily living,” Miller says.

The aquatics program has been instrumental in aiding that process, Euwema adds.

“We have a very active population here, and aquatics is one more way to get them back to their activities.” **v&v**

a helping hand

Rehabilitation following an illness or trauma plays a key role in getting patients back on their feet more quickly. Rehab services at Littleton Adventist Hospital include inpatient and outpatient physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy and massage therapy.

Physical therapists and occupational therapists help nonhospitalized patients cope with impairments in their work, home and sporting activities. They may conduct a workplace evaluation, provide customized prosthetic devices, use energy conservation techniques or develop a program to improve body mechanics on the job. Outpatient therapists also help patients improve physical functioning through exercise, soft tissue and joint mobilization, education and other modalities.

Following surgery, patients at the Porter Center for Joint Replacement at Porter Adventist Hospital learn to cope with everyday tasks, such as getting in and out of the shower and caring for their wounds. Oftentimes, they visit “Independence Square,” an area of the center equipped with a mock car, kitchen and storefronts where they can practice real-life activities.