

# WATER IS NOT ONLY FOR DRINKING

HYDROTHERAPY FOR SMALL ANIMALS  
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Greek for “water healing”, hydrotherapy has been used since the 1800’s as warm and cold compresses to help alleviate pain and reduce swelling. Though using the natural buoyancy of water we can now utilize it for low impact physiotherapy. This is accomplished by adjusting the water level to reduce ones weight on their legs (in dogs and cats we can reduce this weight bearing load by up to 60% without inducing a swimming reflex). Humans use this to exercise in activities such as water aerobics.



Using the underwater treadmill (pictured) we can have a controlled exercise program, as you would on a conventional treadmill though reduce the percussive forces on your joints and spine. This property has become a very useful tool in rehabilitation post operatively as well as to aid in recovery from non-surgically repaired injuries.

Though the water is creating buoyancy it is also creating a resistance approximately ten fold that of air. Utilizing this aspect we are able to build and tone muscles without adding inflammation to an injury site, arthritic joint or surgical site and has proven to be effective in weight loss and conditioning. The role of the water resistance allows for a shorter exercise term that is equivalent to much longer walk on dry land. This is dependant on water level and speed of the treadmill belt.

Here at PAWS we keep the water temperature between 85°F and 92°F year round which has been shown to have the best therapeutic values to minimize muscle damage or further injury that can occur with exercising cold muscles.

Whether it be for a reason listed above or wanting your four-legged friend to have a controlled exercise this summer that won’t burn their paws please contact us by phone or you can email the rehab team at [Rehabilitation@pawstucson.com](mailto:Rehabilitation@pawstucson.com).

*“Humans have been benefiting from Hydrotherapy for years, and now, so are dogs and cats!” - Randy Aronson, VMD, Radio Pet Vet*