Hydrostatic pressure helps decrease swelling.

Gait training in a pool eliminates the need for crutches or other assisted devices. Without these devices, the injured individual can achieve a regular gait and the involved muscles will fire naturally.

**Extremely Effective Hydrotherapy**

**Exercise for Treating Common Injuries Part 1:**

**LATERAL ANKLE SPRAIN**

**SAMPLE PROGRESSION**

**GAIT TRAINING**

*ONE OF THE FIRST PRIORITIES FOLLOWING AN ANKLE SPRAIN IS ACHIEVING A NORMAL GAIT.*

By putting an individual in the pool, the water makes it possible to walk much earlier in the acute injury stage than walking on land.

Water’s buoyancy and anti-gravity properties create an effective environment for partial weight bearing exercises.

**EXERCISE:**

*SIMPLY WALK BACK AND FORTH IN THE POOL.*

**SINGLE LEG BALANCE WHILE PLAYING CATCH**

**ACITVATING PROPRIOCEPTIVE NEUROMUSCULAR RECEPTORS IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT IN THE EARLY STAGES FOLLOWING AN ANKLE SPRAIN.**

Using a balance exercise with an outside force of catching a ball is a simple yet effective way to achieve this activation.

Water not only provides a safe environment, its contact with the individual’s skin activates many proprioceptive receptors.

**EXERCISE:**

*STAND ON ONE LEG AND TOSS A BALL WITH SOMEONE OUTSIDE THE POOL.*

**DOUBLE LEG LINE HOPS**

The water’s resistance helps maintain and/or build strength in the muscles surrounding the ankle with limited stress to the joint itself.

Working in the water makes it possible to initiate this exercise sooner than it would be possible on land.

**EXERCISE:**

*HOP WITH TWO FEET BACK AND FORTH OVER A LINE IN THE POOL. LAND ON YOUR TOES AND JUMP QUICKLY AS SOON AS YOU LAND.*

**UNDERWATER RUNNING**

Running is important to help maintain fitness levels and sustain cardiovascular endurance.

An individual can run in the water during the rehab process long before they can run on land. Running in the water can lead to running on land much sooner.

**EXERCISE:**

*RUN IN THE WATER.*

**SIDE-TO-SIDE ALTERNATE LEG BOUNDS**

High level plyometric exercises should be introduced before an individual returns to sports and an active lifestyle.

These exercises are included because they are used in sports such as football, soccer, and basketball.

**EXERCISE:**

*STAND ON ONE LEG AND BOUND LATERALLY! NOTE THE HYDROSTIC RESISTANCE. JUMP QUICKLY AND POWERFULLY BACK TO THE OTHER LEG.*

---

*BY: PAUL SECONDO, MA, ATC*

Always consult a medical health care professional before performing any of these interventions.