



Hippotherapy: Question and Answer

How is Hippotherapy different from over the traditional clinical setting?

Hippotherapy takes the patient out of the traditional clinical setting and places them into a more relaxed, yet stimulating atmosphere in order to help them meet their functional goals. Patients are in a natural environment, which may help integrate their needs into everyday life experiences. Children, who are sensitive to being “different”, do not consider the riding environment to be a clinic.

They are more motivated to participate in their treatment when on horseback. The emotional benefits of being able to ride and perform well on a horse are enormous - very often the patient develops a better self image due to their ability to participate in an enjoyable activity in a natural setting. In time, they may improve and be able to transition from hippotherapy to a therapeutic riding program once their functional goals have been met.

Who can benefit from therapy using the horse as a treatment tool?

Patients with disorders that demonstrate the following dysfunctions:

- abnormal tone – (weakness or spasticity)
- abnormal reflexes
- asymmetries
- poor postural control
- impaired balance
- impaired coordination
- decreased mobility
- delayed speech
- delayed motor skills
- poor gait pattern

Patients that typically demonstrate these difficulties include:

People with neurological diagnoses including:

- Cerebral Palsy
- Multiple Sclerosis

- Parkinson's Disease
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Cerebrovascular Accident (stroke)
- Developmental Delay
- Autism

People with orthopaedic limitations including:

- Muscular Dystrophy
- Mild Scoliosis
- Weakness in the trunk, upper or lower extremities
- Limitations in soft tissue mobility (spasms)
- Limitations in joint motion (contractures)

Is it covered by insurance?

We do not accept insurance directly. You will be responsible for the full amount of services at the time they are rendered. You will be given a bill that you can submit to your insurance company for reimbursement. They may pay all, part or none of the bill depending on your individual coverage. Insurance companies vary widely so you should check with your own carrier.

Do I need a prescription?

Yes. You will need a prescription from your doctor asking for "Occupational Therapy – evaluation and treatment". Same if you are requesting Physical, or Speech therapy, respectively.

When is Hippotherapy available?

10:00-12:00 Tuesdays and Thursdays as availability permits.

What is the cost?

Initial Assessment Fee is \$150
Each 45 minute Therapy Session is \$75.

How do I get enrolled?

Call the NAC and we will perform a pre-screen to see if you are appropriate for Hippotherapy. If you are appropriate for Hippotherapy, you will be sent an Information Packet. Return your completed information packet to the NAC, including physician's referral, and we will contact you to set up an appointment for your Initial Assessment.

Feel free to contact us with other questions

Kim Desautels OTR/L 801-554-1824
Jessica Wignall Equestrian Program Manager ext.608