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Making waves in aquatic therapy: Post-surgical management of open shoulder procedures

Sue Klappa

Davenport University, USA

The use of aquatic therapy is a novel and successful method for regaining function and mobility in the management of shoulder impairments. Aquatic therapy should also be considered after open shoulder procedures such as rotator cuff repairs, shoulder decompressions, and total shoulder arthroplasty (TSA). Aquatic therapy aids in the recovery of mobility, early in the post-operative period. This method of treatment minimizes pain, induced by post-operative rehabilitation efforts while improving function. Hydrotherapy stimulates proprioceptive feedback while minimizing nociceptive function. A protocol of aquatic exercises may be commenced within 6 days after surgery with no adverse effects. This presentation will discuss the indications, contraindications, and outcomes for aquatic therapy from a clinical practice, utilizing aquatic therapy with regard to the recovery of function in the post-surgical management of open shoulder procedures. The use of aquatic therapy in treating adhesive capsulitis is promising and will also be discussed. Biomechanical considerations regarding traditional physical therapy options will be contrasted with the novel approach of aquatic therapy for post-surgical management of open shoulder procedures and adhesive capsulitis in clinical practice.

Biography

Sue Klappa has completed her PhD in Education, Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Minnesota and her Master of Physical Therapy degree from St. Catherine University. She is now the Chair/Program Director of the developing Doctor of Physical Therapy Program at Davenport University in Michigan, USA. She has passion for exploring how interprofessional collaboration, global health, and international community engagement influence the formation of professional identity among physical therapists. She has authored more than 56 peer reviewed papers and presentations at national and international venues. She taught in many areas of physical therapy education.

sue.klappa@davenport.edu

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