

Role of Aquatic Therapy in Elderly with Knee Pain: A Narrative Review

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Abstract

Introduction: Knee osteoarthritis (KOA) is increasingly prevalent; many patients require knee arthroplasty. The Indian population had the highest prevalence of Knee Pain, 31.8%. Aquatic therapy offers a unique approach to addressing knee pain, harnessing the buoyancy and support of water to create a nurturing environment for rehabilitation and healing. There is a lack of studies investigating the long-term effects of Aquatic therapy on elderly knee pain subjects. Most studies focus on short-to-medium-term outcomes, leaving a gap in understanding the sustainability of benefits over long-term effects.

Methods: Literature Search: We systematically searched electronic databases (Pubmed, EMBASE, Scopus, and the Cochrane Library) from inception to April 2024.

Eligibility Criteria: Studies involving aquatic therapy in elderly people with knee pain and asymptomatic subjects were included.

Findings of the review: The results suggest that a 12-week AC training program improves self-reported knee pain and physical functioning in patients with mild-to-moderate knee OA. A Comprehensive review of existing studies reveals that aquatic therapy significantly reduces pain and improves functional mobility in older adults suffering from knee osteoarthritis and other chronic knee conditions.

Conclusion: Only land-based exercise showed some improvement in pain and muscle strength compared with the control group, while no clinical benefits were detectable after aquatic exercise compared with the control group. However, aquatic exercise has significantly fewer adverse effects than a land-based programme. Still, it is a beneficial approach for managing knee pain in the elderly, offering significant improvements in pain relief, functionality and Quality of life.