

4 Paws Hydrotherapy Centre

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Pre-Swim Information

PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO READ ALL OF THIS INFORMATION.

Preparation for your Hydrotherapy session:

- Please do not feed your pet for at least 2 hours before and after each session.
- Please bring your own towels to the Hydrotherapy session which the hydrotherapist will use to dry your dog/cat for you.
- Your pet will be rinsed after its session. If you would like us to shampoo them, please bring some with you.
- If the weather is cold, please bring a coat for your dog to wear on its journey home to help keep their muscles warm.
- Please contact us to postpone the session if your pet:
 - Is a bitch in season.
 - Has an open wound.
 - Has suffered from vomiting and diarrhoea in the last 48 hours.
 - If your dog has a contagious condition such as kennel cough.
- Please make sure that your pet has toileted before its session, defecation in the pool or UWT means that all sessions for the next 24 hours will be cancelled whilst the water is treated, therefore a **penalty will be charged**.
- Please contact us prior to a session if there have been any changes in your dogs or cats health since their last session. This will allow the hydrotherapist time to contact your veterinary surgeon to discuss any issues.
- If your dog or cat requires any emergency medication for a condition such as Epilepsy, please make sure that you bring it with you to each session.
- Please wear suitable non-slip clean footwear, as the floor may be wet around the pool area.
- Flea treatments must not be administered on the day or day before your dog or cats swims.

What to Expect:

- Outside the unit there are **three allocated parking spaces marked 4 Paws**. Please park in one of these. Please do not park in the adjacent bay with no 4 paws sign, it is not our parking space !
- We have a car ramp in our reception area which you are welcome to use when getting your dog in and out of the car if you cannot lift them.
- When you arrive the hydrotherapist may be in the pool already with another patient, if this is the case, please weigh your dog on our scales and take a seat in the waiting area.
- When inside the centre, please make sure that your dog is on the lead and under control at all times.
- If you have a reactive dog, please leave it in the car and wait in our reception. When the previous dog has left you can then bring your dog into the unit without worrying about confrontation with another dog. We will do all we can to help you manage dogs with any behavioural issues, please just let us know.
- Your initial assessment will take up to 40 minutes and will consist of either physiotherapy and hydrotherapy treatment, or just one of the treatments depending on what is suitable to the dog/cats condition. Subsequent sessions will be for 30 minutes.
- Before entering the pool or aquatic treadmill, your dog/cat will be given a health check and showered to warm the muscles. We will also take muscle measurements which will be checked again periodically. They will then be fitted with a flotation jacket or harness
- The pool and aquatic treadmill have been carefully designed with ramp entry and exit for ease of access and safety post-surgery.
- The welfare and safety of your dog or cat is our main priority, therefore a qualified hydrotherapist will be in the pool with them at all times. This will initially help them relax and it enables the hydrotherapist to monitor their range of motion and help them get the maximum benefit from each session whether it is for pre-operative, post-operative or for fitness.
- Initially, your dog/cat will only be in the water for a very short period of time (Possibly 1 minute). This is for safety and recovery assessment. The effort required in water is a lot more than on land. 5 minutes of swimming is the equivalent to a 30 minute walk! The length of time your dog/cat is in the water will increase as their health and fitness improves.
- After the session, your dog or cat will be showered and towel dried. The Centre has a dryer available for owners to use if they would like to.
- **We require 24 hours notice for cancellations, failure to do so means the full session charge will still apply and you may be asked to pay in advance for future sessions.**
- Payment for each session will need to be made on the date of the session or before.

- Please ensure that you arrive on time for your appointment. Up to 10 minutes late, we will start your session but it will have to finish on time. Over 10 minutes late, we will do our best to fit your session in, however, this may not always be possible. In either case the full session charge will still apply.
- 4 Paws hydrotherapy centre reserves the right to use any still or video photography taken during the sessions as it requires (usually for promotional purposes). Please notify us if you would not like us to use this footage.
- Please note that if your pet has been referred for a fun and fitness session, if there is a condition present, we will not be treating it for this condition. If you would like a specific condition treated in the pool, your vet will need to complete a 'Hydrotherapy and Physiotherapy' referral form which can be downloaded from our website.
- Please be aware that physical exercise with the pressure of the water on the chest and abdomen can put stress on your dog's cardio respiratory functions. If there is an undiagnosed cardiac or respiratory condition your dog could be at risk. Whilst all due care will be taken, if your dog has a diagnosed or undiagnosed spinal condition, there is a possibility their condition could be worsened by hydrotherapy.
- Owners and animals make use of the pool entirely at their own risk. 4 Paws Hydrotherapy Centre do not accept responsibility for an injury to owner or animal whilst using the hydrotherapy pool or aquatic treadmill and can accept no responsibility for loss or damage of personal belongings whilst on the premises.
- Due to a high number of dogs using the hydrotherapy pool and aquatic treadmill, we recommend that all dogs are vaccinated. An unvaccinated dog is at risk of Parvo Virus, Leptospirosis, distemper and hepatitis/ adeno virus. Whilst every effort is made to maintain good hygiene, 4 Paws Hydrotherapy Centre cannot be held responsible if for any reason a dog contracts such virus or disease.

Benefits of Hydrotherapy:

- Hydrotherapy provides non-weight bearing exercise for your pet in a safe, controlled environment. It is particularly beneficial post-surgery to help improve the range of motion and restore and maintain muscle tissue on an affected limb.
- It is an excellent form of exercise because most of the muscles used in daily movement are involved - without the stresses caused by motion on hard ground.
- Due to the increased resistance of movement created by the water, the muscles have to work harder than they would do on land, therefore it helps to improve your pet's cardiovascular fitness and helps aid weight loss.
- Warm water increases the circulation of blood to the muscles, increasing the supply of oxygen and nutrients which leads to muscle relaxation and a reduction in pain and stiffness.