

WHAT IS HYDROTHERAPY?

QUICK LINKS:

Hydrotherapy

- [History](#)
- [Modern Practices](#)
- [Types & Techniques](#)
- [For Arthritis](#)
- [For Athletes](#)
- [For Older Adults](#)
- [For Health & Wellness](#)
- [Hot Tubs](#)

Hydrotherapy is the practice of using warm water immersion, such as soaking in a hot tub or spa, to help treat a wide range of ailments such as high blood pressure, anxiety, aching joints, and sore muscles.

Hydrotherapy for arthritis in particular is often recommended by physicians, as it helps alleviate many of the symptoms of arthritis. Many people with active lifestyles take advantage of the many hydrotherapy benefits; it reduces post-workout soreness, aids in muscle recovery, and is often used in physical therapy.

Finally, hydrotherapy is a great stress-reducer and has been shown to relieve anxiety and promote feelings of well-being.

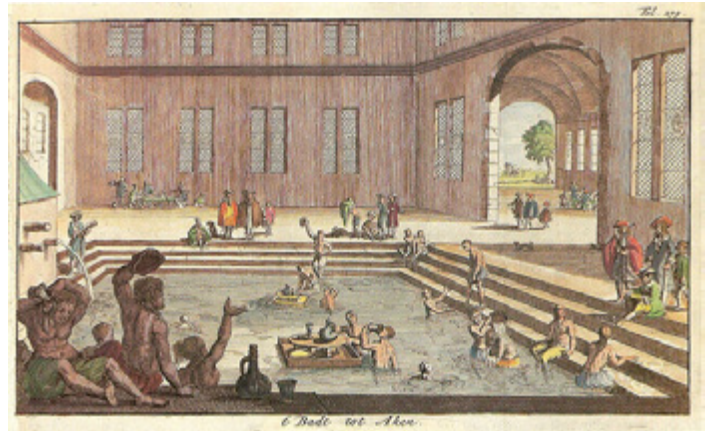
Most people view hot tubs simply as a way to relax or as a great place to enjoy time with friends and family. They are incredible places to socialize and relax. But what if your hot tub could do more for you? What if it could do a lot more?

This concept of healing treatment along with physical and mental therapy is both an ancient art, practiced for centuries and a modern scientific breakthrough. Hydrotherapy has long been shown to be effective for treating a variety of conditions but it was once difficult to attain. However, with the modern day advancements in hot tub spa technology, you can enjoy hydrotherapy in your own backyard.

THE HISTORY OF HYDROTHERAPY

Hydrotherapy has existed in various forms since ancient times and was probably used even before the earliest documented history. Cultures in ancient Egypt, Persia, Greece, the Roman Empire, and China all practiced hydrotherapy in some form or another.

Their traditions varied to some degree. Some bathed in water treated with essential oils, some looked for therapy in communal baths for the public and some devised ways to bring warm water hydrotherapy to smaller more personalized pools or vessels.



"Aachen Kaiserbad 1682" by Jan Luyken or Cuyken (ungeklärt)

Ancient hydrotherapy was sometimes referred to as "the water cure" and early medical practitioners used this to treat a variety of maladies. Many early hydrotherapists prescribed hydrotherapy as a medicinal treatment for physical ailments, for emotional and mental healing, as a means for promoting overall health and wellness and as a way to achieve balance across an individual's physical, mental and spiritual life.

THE PATH TO MODERN HYDROTHERAPY

Tobias Smollet is often credited as the father of modern hydrotherapy massage, due to his 1752 essay *On the External Use of Water* which promotes the use of pumped water treatment for a variety of diseases.

Still, many technical challenges persisted for several centuries. Pumping water with enough force to achieve a therapeutic massage remained difficult well into the 20th century.

In 1949 Candido Enzo Jacuzzi is credited with designing a whirlpool bath to treat his son's (Kenny Jacuzzi) rheumatism.* This whirlpool used a submersible pump small enough that it could be incorporated into a bath tub or small pool.



This submersible pump and subsequent products marketed by Jacuzzi Brothers Inc. kicked off the modern era of at-home hydrotherapy in jetted tubs and outdoor spas and the Jacuzzi name is tied with some ambiguity to the entire hot tub and spa product category today.**

We've come a long way in our understanding of physiology and human health, yet hydrotherapy is still as highly regarded as ever as a specific medical therapy and way of leading a balanced life. Also sometimes called hydromassage, modern hydrotherapy centers around applying massage therapy techniques through the use of mechanically and thermally enhanced water.



Today, hydrotherapy is recognized not only as a method for relaxation, but also as an effective treatment for several diseases and ailments. As we discuss below, anyone can benefit from the natural healing qualities of hydrotherapy massage.



HYDROTHERAPY TYPES & TECHNIQUES

Since hydrotherapy can be performed right at home, there are many types and techniques you can try. Here are some of the most popular hydrotherapy techniques:

Watsu

Watsu is a combination of the words “water” and “shiatsu”, meaning you receive a massage while submerged in water. This is commonly done with a masseuse standing in the water with you, but hot tubs are a convenient and more enjoyable way to do this. Hot tub jets target different muscles throughout your body and can be customized with different massage types and power.



Contrast Hydrotherapy

Contrast hydrotherapy is the practice of alternating between hot and cold water therapy to relieve your aches and pains. This is commonly done by athletes, who are known to take ice baths after a game, followed by a hot tub, and then repeating again.

Water Exercise

Exercising in water can help strengthen your joints and muscles. Hot tub are a great tool for water exercise because they are spacious enough without having water that is too deep to stand in.

Mineral Baths

A simpler form of hydrotherapy is soaking in a mineral bath. Epsom salt, lavender oil, and jasmine are common additives that enhance your bath or hot tub experience. These are helpful for relieving stress and calming your nerves.



HYDROTHERAPY FOR ARTHRITIS

Why is hydrotherapy in a hot tub so good for arthritis? Well, hot tub provide 3 things that do wonders for your aching joints: warmth, massage, and buoyancy.

Warmth

Soaking in warm water causes your blood vessels to dilate, which increases the flow of nutrients to your muscles to help you heal faster. The warmth also helps your muscles relax and be less stiff.



Massage

Research by Tiffany Field, PHD and director at the University of Miami School of Medicine, found that massage can lead to a significant reduction in pain for those with arthritis in their hands. Massaging jets plus the warmth of a hot tub are a great combination to treat arthritic pain.

Buoyancy

In addition, being in a hot tub adds buoyancy, or an upward force, to your body. This takes the weight off your joints and bones and allows you to move and exercise more easily.

Bill T., a hot tub owner, said, "For the past year their has not been a week that we have not used [our hot tub], and many weeks I use it everyday. I have arthritis in my knees and feet, and the spa has been great

HYDROTHERAPY FOR ATHLETES

Many young, active adults find that hydro massage allows them to maintain a more active and healthy lifestyle. Hot tubs are a great way to support fitness goals including heavy training for certain sports and even weight loss.

Warm water therapy can help you loosen stiff muscles and joints, reduce swelling, and recover from a tough workout faster. And with further modern advances like the Bullfrog Spas patented JetPak Therapy System, you can create a customized massage to target virtually any muscle group in any part of the body.



In 2007, Men's Health Magazine* found that hot water immersion can reduce post-workout muscle soreness by up to 40%. This can make a huge difference in your workout goals, whether you're looking to hit the gym more frequently, finally reach a new PR, or train for a big race. Hydrotherapy is a popular technique in sports medicine and physical therapy, so why not enjoy the same benefits from the comfort of your own home?



HYDROTHERAPY FOR OLDER ADULTS

Older adults can also benefit from hydrotherapy. As we age, our bodies become more susceptible to aches, pains, joint soreness and soft tissue injuries. Lower back pain, arthritis, neck pain, joint pain, and even symptoms of diabetes can all be relieved through the help of hydro massage and hydrotherapy.

In addition to treating your aches and pains, you can also use your hot tub to practice low impact exercises, such as hot tub yoga and water aerobics. This can be a great option for older adults who are looking to stay active without the risk of high-impact exercises.

Many suffering from sore muscles, chronic pain, joint pain, or even just everyday aches and pains turn to hydro massage as an all-natural pain relief treatment. Additionally, hydrotherapy massage is a great all-natural alternative to addictive pain killers.



HYDROTHERAPY FOR OVERALL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Regardless of your age and activity level, hydrotherapy can make a meaningful positive impact on your overall health and wellness. With a portable hot tub at home you can achieve these benefits in the privacy of your own backyard. In addition to the many physical benefits, hydro massage allows you to slow down, meditate, and relax your body. Know the safety guidelines around hydrotherapy before you start. If you are pregnant, consult with your doctor on safety recommendations for hot tub use while pregnant.

Believe it or not, hydrotherapy can even be used to treat emotional health. Soaking in warm water can relieve stress, anxiety, and can even solve some of the causes of insomnia. Creating a daily home spa routine can help you to feel more tranquil and connected to your life and surroundings.



HYDROTHERAPY AND HOT TUBS

Hydrotherapy can occur in many places including pools, medical centers and natural hot spring spas. However, one of the most convenient ways to enjoy the benefits of hydrotherapy is with a personal hot tub or spa. With modern spa technology advancements, you can even enjoy a highly customized, targeted massage and that can all happen in the privacy of your own backyard.

When selecting a spa specifically for hydrotherapy, look for models that offer highly customizable massaging jet systems. Bullfrog Spas' patented JetPak Therapy System offers 16 different massages, each bioengineered to target specific muscle groups based on your needs and preferences. JetPaks are modular jetted spa seats that can be interchanged at any time. JetPaks also allow you to easily adjust the intensity of each massage to fit your specific hydromassage needs.

Interested in learning more about adding hydrotherapy to your own backyard? Check out our SpaDesign customization tool and get started on your path to health and wellness today.



*CANDIDO JACUZZI, 83, IS DEAD. New York Times. Retrieved August 20, 2015 from: <https://www.nytimes.com/1986/10/10/obituaries/candido-jacuzzi-83-is-dead-inventor-of-whirlpool-bath.html>

**Candido Jacuzzi. In Wikipedia. Retrieved August 20, 2015 from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Candido_Jacuzzi

**Quill, Scott. (2007, Jan-Feb). Reduce soreness by 40 percent. Men's Health, 22, 46.