



About your hydrotherapy session.

Hydrotherapy:

Hydrotherapy is an aquatic exercise therapy which is suitable to help treat many different conditions. The aquatic environment and the buoyancy it provides allows dogs who may not be able to bare their entire weight on land, to exercise freely and effectively whilst in water.

The alleviation of the pressures of gravity combined with walking the body through the increased viscosity (thickness) of water compared to air, makes it an intensive yet safe environment to help maintain and build muscle and allow joints to move more freely.

Our hydrotherapy is conducted in our specially designed canine underwater treadmill. This allows us to control the water level, speed, intensity and duration of the treatment.

Having undergone specialised advanced training in the use of underwater treadmills we have obtained expert knowledge of treatment options for many differing conditions. Your dog will be guided and monitored throughout the treatment with a direct hands on approach ensuring the highest level of support and effectiveness of the treatment for the specified condition.

Hydrotherapy can be used for surgery/injury rehabilitation, arthritic or elderly patients, improving strength and fitness, weight management and more.

About your dog:

Once you are booked in for your first consult with us, we will need to obtain details from your vet about the condition you're looking to treat with hydrotherapy and vet clinical notes (health history) details of medications of your dog's current physical condition to ensure there are no contraindications to treatment. This will enable us to develop the safest and most effective treatment plan using therapies which complement their veterinary care to help improve your dog's condition. As we are not veterinarians, we cannot diagnose conditions, perform surgery or prescribe medications. We will however work alongside your veterinarian, to ensure we provide the right treatment for your dog's condition.

Please speak to your veterinarian / vet receptionist and ask them to email us the clinical notes, diagnosis and any surgery details including imagery (x-rays, CT scans, etc.) to contact@crah.com.au

What to do/bring before your appointment:

1. Unless it is absolutely necessary, please do not feed your dog for at least 3 hours before a session.
2. Limit the amount of exercise your dog has that day. This will allow them to get the most out of their session and be at their strongest.
3. Bring a towel. We will dry your dog with one of our towels after getting out of the water, but it is always best to bring along an extra towel to get them extra dry and to have for the car trip home.
4. Please ensure your dog has been to the toilet beforehand. If you arrive early please stop in at a local park to toilet your dog. This is of the utmost importance. If your dog has a gastrointestinal issue or diarrhoea we will not be able to see your dog for a hydrotherapy appointment, but we can substitute for a laser therapy or massage session if this is suited to your dog's condition.

If your dog does a poo in the water it can mean we have to cut your appointment short, and depending on the severity, it may affect other appointments after you.

On arrival:

Please park in our visitor car park when you arrive – the entrance is adjacent to our grooming and day care BE MORE DOG on Victoria Street. To get in to the car park, please approach the garage door and call us on 0488 811 411. We will then open the roller door for you. The whole parking lot is for visitors, so just choose any spot.

We run our appointments right on time. So we ask that you to not arrive much earlier than your appointment, as we currently don't have a waiting room for our hydrotherapy patients unless you want to wait in your car.

Our hydrotherapy & rehab space is at the back of the building, so we will come and collect you from the car park when we are ready for your appointment.

First consult:

Our initial consults for hydrotherapy run for up to 1.5 hours. We have decided to set it this way in order to ensure that we have enough time to adequately discuss your dog's condition, and so your dog has a positive first experience with underwater treadmill hydrotherapy.

It can be a strange experience for a dog to get into a glass tank with someone they just met, only to have water come out of seemingly nowhere, and once settled the ground starts moving beneath their feet. Accordingly, it is very important that we follow the dog's comfort level and go its own pace.

It is really important that we build a positive association with the underwater treadmill, as the dog will get a lot more out of their treatment when they are relaxed and motivated.

In order to do this, we ask that you bring along your dog's favourite motivator – this can be a squeaky toy or ball, or a very high value treat (things like peanut butter or BBQ chicken work well) so that we can start your dog off on the right foot, and they quickly make the association that hydrotherapy = treats or ball etc.

Follow up consults

Ongoing sessions run for approximately 45 mins from the time you arrive to leaving. This does not mean that your dog will be exercising for 45 mins. Depending on the age and condition of your dog, your dog might walk / swim for approx. 10-20 mins total of your appointment time. We run our sessions in intervals, with lots of time for breaks in between rounds to rest, stretch and incorporate some massage in the treatment. As your dog's fitness improves so will the exercise duration.

Conditions or contraindications - when we cannot conduct a hydrotherapy session with your dog:

- If your dog is a bitch in season
- If there are any open wounds or superficial infections.
- In the acute phase of an injury. As hydrotherapy is an exercise therapy it is important that we allow the dog to rest during this phase of recovery.
- If your dog has a gastrointestinal issue or diarrhoea (we will not be able to see your dog for a hydrotherapy appointment, but we can substitute for a laser therapy or massage session if this is suited to your dog's condition).
- If your dog has respiratory problems or advanced cardiac illness.
- If your dog has received a topical flea/worm treatment in the last 72 hours.
- If your dog is undergoing chemotherapy, we may not be able to see them for the following few days after a dose.

[Read more about contraindications on the next page.](#)

Contraindications to treatment:

There may be certain circumstances when treatment might not be suitable for your dog. In certain conditions conducting treatments may have a negative effect on the dog's specific condition, overall health or wellbeing. These factors are called contraindications.

There are two types of contraindication which may be present. A general contraindication refers to a circumstance in which treatment cannot be performed at all.

The other type of contraindication is a regional contraindication. This means that the regional area of the dog which is affected should not be treated, but that treatment may take place in other parts of the body.

A caution is another condition whereby the dog may require some adjustment in the way the therapy is conducted around a specific the area of concern.

Contraindications may come in many forms and may be related to medication, superficial or skin issues, infection, pain, inflammation, burns, fractures, heart conditions, malignancies, neurological conditions, injury, pregnancy and recent travel.

We are trained in various treatment modalities and as part of this training, we have learnt to identify conditions in which treatment in each field may be detrimental.

Specific contraindications:

Treatments cannot be carried out in acute stage: fractures, inflammation, severe muscle injury, torn ligament, joint swelling.

Conditions where treatments may only be carried out with vet approval: on blood thinning medication, heart conditions, following surgery, spinal conditions, skin conditions, in pain, malignancy (cancer) or infections.

Treatments cannot be undertaken if your dog is extreme pain, pregnant (1st trimester), or immediately following a very long flight or car trip.

As part of our assessment prior to starting therapy we will require your dog's full health history and veterinary records, including imagery (x-rays, CT scans, etc.), details of medications and any other supporting documents you can provide. This will enable us to develop the safest and most effective treatment plan using therapies which complement their veterinary care to help improve your dog's condition.

We will provide advice on best practice for environment and exercise according to your dog's condition following treatment, with ongoing support as required.