

Aquatic exercise cuts pain, disability from chronic low back pain

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(HealthDay)—Therapeutic aquatic exercise leads to greater pain

alleviation in patients with chronic low back pain compared with physical therapy, according to a study published online Jan. 7 in *JAMA Network Open*.

Meng-Si Peng, from the Shanghai University of Sport, and colleagues assessed the long-term effects of therapeutic aquatic exercise on people with [chronic low back pain](#). The analysis included 113 participants randomly assigned to either therapeutic aquatic exercise (56 participants) or the [physical therapy](#) group (57 participants).

The researchers found that compared with the physical therapy modalities group, the therapeutic aquatic exercise group showed greater alleviation of disability after the three-month intervention, at the six-month follow-up, and at the 12-month follow-up. Improvements in favor of the therapeutic aquatic exercise group at 12 months included the number of participants who met the minimal clinically important difference in [pain](#) (at least a 2-point improvement on the numeric rating scale) and disability (at least a 5-point improvement on the Roland-Morris Disability Questionnaire).

"This finding may prompt clinicians to recommend therapeutic aquatic exercise to patients with chronic low back pain as part of treatment to improve their health through active [exercise](#) rather than relying on passive relaxation," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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