

## Patient Resources

### Hydrotherapy

Hydrotherapy, also known as balneotherapy (“bath therapy”) or aquatic therapy, has been used as a form of alternative therapy for many years. For some, hydrotherapy may mean soaking in warm water to reduce the amount of pressure on joints, while others may introduce movement and exercise to further stimulate their bodies.

#### Who is it for?

Hydrotherapy is very beneficial for individuals with various types of musculoskeletal conditions, including fibromyalgia, arthritis, and low back pain. *It is important that individuals with arthritis discuss their interest in hydrotherapy with their rheumatologist to ensure that it is a safe option.*

#### Does it work?

The National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH) has conducted research on hydrotherapy, and have found that it can provide short-term improvement in pain and health-related quality of life for individuals with fibromyalgia. Warm water stimulates blood flow to stiff muscles and the buoyancy of water unweights your joints to allow for an easier workout.



#### Before you make your appointment...

- Discuss your thoughts of hydrotherapy with your rheumatologist to ensure that it is a safe option for you.
- Ask about the training, experience, and credentials of the physical therapist you are considering.
- Ask about the number of sessions that may be needed, the cost of each session, and insurance coverage.
- Inform your physical therapist of your needs and physical condition.

Updated June 2017

Adapted from the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health & The Arthritis Foundation