

## The Use of Waterproof Dressing in Aquatic Therapy Settings

### Intro:

It is common practice to utilize waterproof dressings to cover areas of non-intact skin prior to entry into the pool.

### Why it Works:

The purpose of waterproof dressings is to minimize or eliminate complications from aquatic immersion on the area of non-intact skin to the individual and pool community.

### When:

Multiple factors must be considered when deciding to use waterproof dressings vs postponing entry into the pool to a time when skin is intact. These include:

1. Location, size, and condition of non-intact skin area
2. Immune status
3. Skin tolerance for dressing adhesive
4. Risk assessment if dressing fails
5. Reward assessment for Aquatic Therapy



It is important to understand the correct application method to maximize the success rate of waterproof dressings.

### Waterproof Dressing Application:

- Select film size that will give at least 1 inch adhesive border when applied.
- Prepare site. (clean, trim hair if needed, dry)
- Place joint in position to avoid stretch of the dressing when exercising in the pool.
- Follow film manufacturer instructions to apply dressing. **DO NOT STRETCH FILM** during application.
- Apply pressure on film from center out to edges to secure film and prevent air pockets.
- After application check for at least 1 inch border of complete adhesion on all sides. If there are wrinkles that will affect integrity when immersed or less than 1 inch borders, apply another film over existing dressing.

### Waterproof Dressing Removal:

- Lift corner of dressing and gently apply stretch to film in direction horizontal to skin until adhesive gives way.
- Other recommendations:

- Visual check of dressing site every 15 minutes when in pool.
- Limit pool time to 30-45 min on first visit to assess dressing tolerance.
- Limit movement in water that will produce stretch on waterproof film.
- Avoid hot tubs with waterproof dressings.

### Summary:

When a decision is made to use a waterproof dressing during aquatic exercise, proper application and monitoring of the dressing will help minimize or eliminate complications from aquatic immersion.



### References:

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