PHYSICAL THERAPY ADMINISTERED IN WATER
THE803.018

COVERAGE:

Coverage is allowed for whirlpool bath, contrast bath, and Hubbard tank as with any other physical therapy modality.

Coverage is allowed for aquatic therapy when there is documentation in the patient's record that the therapy is administered hands on by a physical therapist, and one to one (not in a group). Documentation should be clear, and show substantial functional gains. Once functional gains have plateaued the patient should be discharged and no further treatments are medically necessary.

DESCRIPTION:

Whirlpool bath is a therapeutic bath in which all or part of the body is exposed to forceful whirling currents of hot water. Whirlpool bath may be used for debridement of traumatic wounds, burns, pressure ulcers or surgical wounds and as an adjunct means to achieve joint mobility.

Contrast bath is immersion of a part of the body alternately in hot and cold water

Hubbard tank is a tank in which a patient may be immersed for the purpose of permitting him to take underwater exercise.

Aquatic therapy is therapeutic exercises taking place in or on water, most likely in a swimming pool. This involves the therapist doing manipulation, mobilization or manual stretching and strengthening in the water instead of on land. This type of therapy may be useful following intra-articular and ligament reconstruction in the knee, as well as for walking reeducation, strengthening leg muscles, and enhancing joint extensibility. Aquatic therapy may be a beneficial form of patient treatment for rheumatic disease.

Hydrotherapy is the application of water, in any form, but usually externally, in the treatment of disease. Any of the above listed forms of water baths or therapy could be called hydrotherapy.

RATIONALE:

None

DISCLAIMER:

State and federal law, as well as contract language, including definitions and specific inclusions/exclusions, takes precedence over Medical Policy and must be considered first in determining coverage. The member's contract benefits in effect on the date that services are rendered must be used. Any benefits are subject to the payment of premiums for the date on which services are rendered. Medical technology is constantly evolving, and we reserve the right to review and update Medical Policy periodically.
HMO Blue Texas physicians who are contracted/affiliated with a capitated IPA/medical group must contact the IPA/medical group for information regarding HMO claims/reimbursement information and other general polices and procedures.

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