

HIPPOTHERAPY

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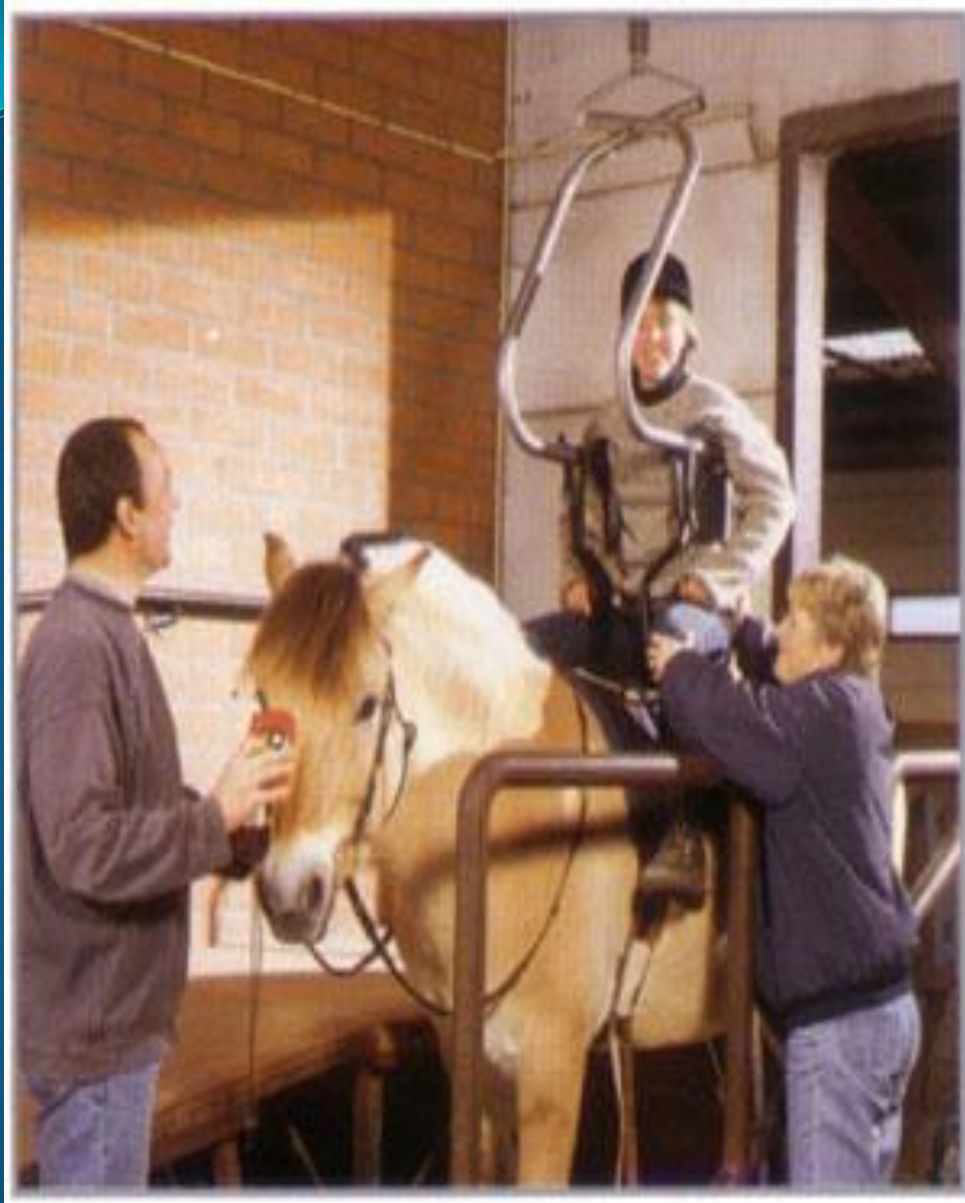
What is Hippotherapy?

It is Equine-Assisted Therapy. Hippotherapy is a treatment that uses the multi-dimensional movement of the horse; from the Greek word "hippos" which means horse. Specially trained physical, occupational and speech therapists use this medical treatment for clients who have movement dysfunction. Historically, the therapeutic benefits of the horse were recognized as early as 468 A.D. The use of the horse as therapy evolved throughout Europe, the United States and Canada.



- Hippotherapy uses activities on the horses that are meaningful to the client. Treatment takes place in a controlled environment where graded sensory input can elicit appropriate adaptive responses from the client.





- Specific riding skills are not taught (as in therapeutic riding), but rather a foundation is established to improve neurological function and sensory processing. This foundation can then be generalized to a wide range of daily activities

Why the Horse?

- The horse's walk provides sensory input through movement, which is variable, rhythmic and repetitive. The resultant movement responses in the client are similar to human movement patterns of the pelvis while walking. The variability of the horse's gait enables the therapist to grade the degree of sensory input to the client,



Then use this movement in combination with other clinical treatments to achieve desired results. Clients respond enthusiastically to this enjoyable learning experience in a natural setting. Physically, Hippotherapy can improve balance, posture, and mobility. Hippotherapy may also affect psychological, cognitive, behavioral and communication functions for clients of all ages. Clients who may benefit from Hippotherapy can have a variety of diagnoses: examples include Cerebral Palsy, Multiple Sclerosis, Developmental Delay, Traumatic Brain Injury, Stroke, Autism and Learning or Language Disabilities. Parents of children involved in Hippotherapy have seen dramatic improvements in all aspects of their children's lives, after only a few sessions.



Benefits of Hippotherapy

- Physically:
- Specially trained therapists take disabled riders through complex series of movements, which consciously and unconsciously use all the body's muscles. The horse rhythmically and naturally moves the body in a manner similar to the human gait, improving posture, balance and muscle control.



Mentally:

- Equine-assisted therapy increases concentration, improves sequential thought processing, increases the rider's ability to articulate emotions, develops special awareness.



Emotionally:

- Equine-assisted therapy provides the opportunity for riders to bond with the horse, instructor, and volunteers, which assists in the development of trust. It is also effective in calming emotive outbursts and reinforcing appropriate behaviors. Contact with the horses and horsemanship training provides a non-competitive setting for learning. New abilities, self-discipline, and improved concentration build self-confidence.



Socially:

Equine-assisted therapy nurtures a positive self-image. Disabled riders often experience independence for the first time in their lives. They also develop an awareness of being part of a team. All riders have the ability to learn skills and participate in a recognized sport. All riders grow in self-esteem, which they take back into their own worlds.

Disabilities Impacted:

- Attention Deficit Disorder
- Autism
- Cerebral Palsy
- Closed Head Injury
- Developmental Delay
- Down Syndrome
- Emotional Disorders
- Hearing Impairment
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Muscular Dystrophy
- Paralysis
- Scoliosis
- Spinal Bifida
- Traumatic Brain Injury



Hippotherapy and Cerebral Palsy

- Hippotherapy in children and adults with cerebral palsy—a condition caused by brain damage that affects posture and movement—is becoming increasingly popular in the U.S. Hippotherapy is both a physical and occupational therapy treatment that utilizes horseback riding to provide engaging, enjoyable, and challenging activities that can significantly improve muscle tone, posture, balance, walking abilities, and more.



How Does Hippotherapy Work?

- The idea behind **hippotherapy** is that the horse's movement provides a sense of rhythm to the rider as well as forces the rider's torso and hips to align and move in the proper physical way. Hippotherapy for patients with cerebral palsy essentially improves rhythm and movement, encourages step spacing (horses step with approximately the same frequency as humans), and promotes normal off-horse movement by training natural motor responses.



Benefits of Hippotherapy

- Hippotherapy can help children and adults with cerebral palsy on many levels. It contributes to a rider's well being physically, psychologically, and emotionally. Some of the physical impairments that may be improved by hippotherapy in people with cerebral palsy are:
 - Abnormal tone
 - Impaired coordination
 - Impaired communication
 - Decreased mobility
 - Poor posture
 - Impaired balance
 - Impaired limbic system function

- Improvement in these areas can lead to improvement in gross motor skills (walking, standing, sitting, etc.), speech, comprehension, and behavior, including motivation, attention, and arousal.
- Hippotherapy is also very emotionally rewarding for children and their families. The bond that develops between a child and a horse during **hippotherapy treatment** is something that a child will both cherish and be motivated by. This therapeutic activity can also increase self-confidence and encourage a child's success.



Your Legal Rights

- If you suspect your child's cerebral palsy may have been the result of medical negligence, the cost of hippotherapy and other types of treatment can be recovered through a [cerebral palsy lawsuit](#). You may also be eligible to seek compensation for other damages including medical bills and pain and suffering. Please contact us today to speak with a qualified and caring **medical malpractice attorney** who can help protect your legal rights and interest.

