

Therapeutic effects of hippotherapy in the elderly: A review of the literature

- Gamez-Calvo L.^a,
- Gamonales J.M.^a,
- Leon K.^a,
- Munoz-Jimenez J.^{a,b}

Abstract

The present work aims to carry out a structured and bibliographic review based on the results found regarding the terms Hippotherapy and Elderly people. For the reference search, the following keywords in English, Hippotherapy and Elderly, were used as descriptors, these keywords being always entered in databases of the same language. The computerized databases SCOPUS, WOS, SPORTDiscus were used. PubMed and Cochrane. To limit the search for documents, four inclusion criteria were introduced: i) Mention at least some of the characteristics of Hippotherapy for the elderly (minimum 20 words that mention the subject), ii) Select only scientific documents (journal articles) These articles may have an experimental design or be review articles, iii) Be accessible and be available in full text or with access to the abstract, and iiiii) Be written in Spanish, English or Portuguese. The results show that the papers on Hippotherapy in the elderly address different research topics and show that equestrian therapies have beneficial therapeutic effects in the elderly population. Hippotherapy interventions improve static balance and dynamic balance, postural balance, functional mobility, flexibility, muscular strength, gait and cadence of steps. They reduce spasticity, causing a decrease in the risk of falls and an improvement in the quality of life of the elderly. In addition, they cause benefits on a psychological level, reducing levels of stress and depression, which produces an improvement in the quality of sleep and positively influences mood. © 2021 Archivos de Medicina del Deporte. All rights reserved.

Author keywords

Benefits; Elderly people; Hippotherapy