

Hippotherapy

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HIPPOTHERAPY IN BEIJING



- ▶ Functional Outcomes of Hippotherapy on a Child with Down Syndrome
- ▶ The Need for "Cross-Training" in Hippotherapy





Report on Hippotherapy Survey: Incident/Injury Analysis

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SAFETY AND HIPPO THERAPY

Insurance providers of liability coverage, those approving reimbursement of services to clients, potential treatment locations (i.e. barn facility owners), family members and others are interested in how safe and effective hippotherapy is. This article will utilize statistics gleaned from the Hippotherapy Business Survey to answer the question about risks and safety related to hippotherapy sessions.

Brief background information regarding the survey:

- ▶ Designed by Rebecca Cook OTR, HPCS, University instructor for the business course of the Hippotherapy Graduate Certification through WMU
- ▶ Administered online for 4 weeks through "Survey Monkey" April-May 2007
- ▶ Announced via American Hippotherapy Association Message Board/ membership email, and the Hippotherapy and NARHA Administration Yahoo Listserves
- ▶ Completed anonymously by therapists who have utilized hippotherapy for at least one year

There were 67 total survey responses with a collective survey average of 453 data years. The

Please enter your profession.

	Response Percent	Response Total
OTR	47.8%	32
COTA	0%	0
PT	44.8%	30
PTA	3%	2
SLP	4.5%	3
Other (please specify)	0%	0
	Total Respondents	67

mean average was 6.8 years experience per respondent overall.

How long have you been completing hippotherapy?

	Response Percent	Response Total
0-1 year	0%	0
1-2 years	16.4%	11
2-4 years	22.4%	15
5-8 years	32.8%	22
9-15 years	20.9%	14
16 years or longer	7.5%	5
	Total Respondents	67

Of the 67 total survey responses there was a collective average of 25,356 sessions per year represented, and a

Approximately how many hippotherapy treatments do you provide in 1 year?

	Response Percent	Response Total
1-20 Hippotherapy tx. per Year	4.5%	3
21-50 Hippotherapy tx. per Year	3%	2
51-100 Hippotherapy tx. per Year	19.4%	13
101-200 Hippotherapy tx. per Year	19.4%	13
201-500 Hippotherapy tx. per Year	30.9%	21
501-800 Hippotherapy tx. per Year	17.9%	12
801-1000 Hippotherapy tx. per Year	6%	4
More than 1000 Hippotherapy tx. per Year	9%	6
Other (please specify)	0%	0
	Total Respondents	67

mean average of 378 sessions per year per respondent overall.

When the average number of hippotherapy years of practice from a respondent (6.8) is multiplied by the average number of sessions per year delivered (378) x 67 respondents, this survey may be reflective of over one hundred thousand (172,217) individual sessions.

Out of this great number of sessions, only twelve (12) total incidents and/or injuries were identified by survey respondents.

Please indicate if any of your past hippotherapy sessions resulted in injury to a client or personnel? (If there was an injury, please indicate who was injured in the "other" category).

	Response Percent	Response Total
NO, there have been no injuries	82.1%	55
YES - 1 injury	13.4%	9
YES - 2 injuries	0%	0
YES - 3-5 injuries	1.5%	1
YES - 5+	0%	0
Other (please specify)	13.4%	9
Total Respondents		67

The collective average number of years represented in the survey is 453. When 453 years are divided by 12 incidents total, the number is **1 incident reported for every 38 years** of hippotherapy treatment provided. When the total number of represented hippotherapy sessions (172,217) is divided by 12 incidents, the number equals **1 incident for every 14,351 hippotherapy sessions**.

These statistics assist in putting perspective on how rare it is to have safety related issues in hippotherapy sessions.

FURTHER ANALYSIS INTO REPORTED INCIDENTS AND/OR INJURIES

Of those who reported incidents, respondents had a mean average of 6.5 years of experience offering hippotherapy which was 4% below the overall survey average, and they had a mean average of providing 491 hippotherapy sessions per year which was 30% higher than the overall survey average. There were no speech therapy related hippotherapy incidents. Five incidents were reported by occupational therapists and seven incidents were reported by physical therapists. It is important to note that **NO reported incident resulted in permanent injury**.

If there has been an injury associated with hippotherapy please indicate the type of treatment and the resolution. (Please check all that apply)

	Response Percent	Response Total
N/A - There have been no injuries	86.6%	58
Basic First Aid Treatment at Center	3%	2
Parent or Client went to doctor on own	4.5%	3
Called 911	3%	2
Injured person was treated and released	4.5%	3
Injured person required a hospital stay	1.5%	1
Injured person was permanently disabled from the incident	0%	0
Injured person returned to hippotherapy treatment	4.5%	3
Injured person did not return for hippotherapy	1.5%	1
Other (please specify)	4.5%	3
Total Respondents		67

Of the 12 reported incidents, 6 were client related, 3 were volunteer related, and 3

were therapist related.

Of the 6 reported client incidents:

- ▶ 3 did not require treatment and returned to HPOT
- ▶ 2 were treated and released and returned to HPOT
- ▶ 1 went to the doctor on their own and did not return to HPOT

Treatment received from all reported incidents:

- ▶ 5 - No treatment Required (3 client related, 1 volunteer related, 1 therapist related)
- ▶ 2 - Basic First Aid at Center
- ▶ 3 - Went to Doctor on Own (1 was a client who did not return to HPOT* and 2 were the therapists)
- ▶ 2 - Called 911 (both were related to horse behavior where a client fell and both clients returned to HPOT)

*The client who did not return to hippotherapy treatment had no permanent injury from the incident and the incident was related to both weather conditions AND equine behavior.

SURVEY COMMENTARY ON INCIDENTS

Comments on Client Incidents: "2 falls in 5 years without injury" requiring no treatment; another respondent identified an incident related to horse behavior and the client did not

require treatment; another was related to horse behavior from weather conditions and was given basic first aid and then went to doctor on their own but never returned for hippo-

therapy; one was related to a fall from horse with client complaint of back pain but returning to HPOT shortly afterwards; and the last noted that a student fell (horse behavior), 911 was called and they went to the ER with no long term problems.

Comments on Volunteer Incidents: One respondent reported the incident did not require treatment; one reported giving basic first aid; another reported "volunteers and therapist bitten by horse".

Comments when therapist was involved: "I pulled a muscle in my back" but did not require treatment; "I re-injured a prior knee injury" and had to have arthroscopic surgery; a bale of hay was dropped, spooked the horse and "I was seen in the emergency room and released".

RISK MANAGEMENT

- ▶ 100% of the respondents had general and professional liability coverage
- ▶ 75% of those who reported incidents had Excess Medical Coverage (Of those who did not have this coverage, 1 had a volunteer incident and 2 had client incidents where they went to the doctor on their own with 1 returning to HPOT and the other not returning). Of the overall survey responses regarding Excess Medical Coverage 67% had coverage, 27% did not have coverage, and 6% were unsure
- ▶ 100% have safety policies
- ▶ Weather policies: 82% have a policy to cancel, 9% do not have a policy, 9% complete other activities (these numbers are essentially the same for those who have not experienced incidents/injuries)
- ▶ Equipment: No significant difference from those who had no reported injuries

Analyzing Reported Causes of Incidents:

- ▶ Nearby car accident
- ▶ Bale of hay was dropped to ground
- ▶ Straining back to help clients

