



Work Sample

Ritz Canine Spa website/Lucies Farm

Dog Swimming — Because Therapy & Exercise Can Be Fun

Canine hydrotherapy sounds so humourless and grim. We prefer to call it Dog Swimming. All dogs can come swimming at Ritz Canine. And swimming is fun!

Some dogs just come for the exercise. One minute in the pool is the equivalent of a one mile walk. Our huge selection of floating toys makes the swim or hydrotherapy even more enjoyable. At the end of your dog's swim, we provide warm, fluffy towels and (with your permission, of course) some home-baked doggie cookies.

Health Benefits

Why take your dog swimming? The warm water (88° F/31° C) relaxes your dog's muscles, encouraging local blood flow and oxygenation of the tissues. This assists with the healing process following surgery or injury. It also reduces localised swelling and associated pain.

Water's inherent buoyancy allows your dog to exercise in a near-weightless environment. For dogs with limited mobility, the buoyancy enables a full range of motion when supervised gently. Swimming also improves a dog's awareness of the position of their limbs as a result of water's viscous nature. This is especially beneficial to dogs with poor proprioception and limb placement.

Hydrotherapy—swimming—is particularly helpful for relieving pain and for retraining and strengthening muscles following surgery or injury. Vets increasingly recommend hydrotherapy both before and after surgery to reduce muscle atrophy and improve cardiovascular fitness.

According to *Veterinary Times*, "Common mobility conditions assisted by hydrotherapy include: hip dysplasia, cruciate ligament ruptures, patella luxation, arthritis, degenerative joint disease, Chronic Degenerative Radiculomyelopathy (CDRM), fractures, and a wide range of spinal conditions." [CITE & LINK to full article; define terms below]

If your veterinarian refers your dog for hydrotherapy, the related costs will usually be covered by pet insurance. Please check with your insurance company first.

Facilities

Our in-ground, 4-ft./1.2-m deep pool at the Ritz Canine is heated to a constant 88° F/31° C. It is located in a heated, dehumidified room. Two skylights let in the Worcestershire sunshine and a window-wall overlooks the garden. Thanks to B&O, everyone enjoys soothing background music.

The pool has an adjustable Fluvo water jet which creates a gentle current to help your dog swim—the "endless pool" effect.

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Safety

We've ensured your dog's swimming experience at the Ritz Canine will be safe as well as enjoyable. A special non-skid material surrounds the pool and covers the gently sloped entry ramp. We do not use hoists and winches. (It's a dog, not a boulder!)

One of our skilled technicians will be in the water at all times. Your dog also will wear a canine life jacket. We keep full treatment records, and can forward these to your dog's veterinarian. We have an emergency veterinarian on call at all times.

We test water quality three times each day using a photometer and test strips, and use the latest water filtration system. We train our staff fully in water treatment, and we use only the most effective, dog-friendly Biolab chemicals.

For the safety of all, we ask that you follow a few common-sense guidelines. We require a vet's certificate prior to your dog's swimming time. Your vet can confirm that vaccinations are up-to-date on the certificate. Unfortunately, dogs with infectious diseases and heart problems are advised to avoid swimming.

Book a session online. Come on in, the water's fine!

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Canine Bliss—Beyond the Tennis Ball

“Massage reduces stress, aids in healing, and provides ongoing health care for your pet. By giving your dog the gift of massage, you are rewarding him or her for a lifetime of companionship and friendship.”

[citation]

Your dog will enjoy the same benefits from regular massage that you do. While we can't promise the full treatment with a pint that our Kobe steers have come to expect, we can assure you a contented, blissed-out pet. According to traditional Chinese medicine, massage enhances the flow of life energy through the body.

Benefits

Touch is a basic need; it is calming and therapeutic. Massage is one way that you can nurture and care for your dog. In *The Healing Touch for Dogs*, Dr. Michael Fox says that pet massage has “both physical and psychological benefits. It is almost essential care, like grooming, feeding, and exercise.” Massage also has specific, medically recognized benefits.

Massage increases blood circulation to most tissues and cells. This feels good and invigorates your dog. It also helps the healing process. The blood is a primary mover of wastes from tissues and organs into the various excretory systems.

Lymph fluid is considered to be the body's secondary circulatory system. It is key in the prevention and control of disease. Unlike the arteries and veins, however, there are no valves or muscular structures to move the fluid through the body. The lymph depends upon massage of the nodes and vessels through physical movement. Especially if your dog is less active, massage helps to release stagnation in your dog's lymphatic system.

Massage releases endorphins, natural chemicals produced in the brain, which act to relieve pain and discomfort. Endorphins also reduce emotional distress. Dr. Fox suggests that, “Pets who are confined indoors will benefit from massage. Older animals who suffer from chronic and degenerative disorders such as muscular cramps, stiffness, and arthritis will also benefit.” Just as with humans, massage aids in maintaining muscle tone and bone density.

Facilities

During the summer, we create a calm oasis in the two-acre garden overlooking our private lake. Our trained masseur or masseuse gently massages your pet, attending to any special areas of need. We speak to the dog softly and gently while s/he enjoys the soothing sounds and smells of an English summer.

In cooler months, or during wet weather, we massage in our softly lit Zen Den, complete with muted music. A massage is especially beneficial after a hydrotherapy session.

Book a session online. And prepare for melt-down.

~ END ~