Guidelines Surf Therapy during COVID-19
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*AMPsurf*, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the physical and emotional rehabilitation of people living with disabilities through Adaptive Surf Therapy. Learn how to Participate, Volunteer and Support at AmpSurf.org.
AmpSurf provides those living with various conditions/disabilities with Adaptive Surf Therapy. Included in the adults and children we serve are those dealing with Post Traumatic Stress (PTS) in particular, Veterans and first responders like Firefighters, Police officers, and EMTs. These groups of people who are suffering from PTS during their daily life can experience anxiety attacks, severe depression (sometimes causing suicide) and social isolation.

Surf Therapy combines the therapeutic elements of the ocean with the adventure and challenges of surfing. Within the AmpSurf program, we combine these elements with the guidance of certified instructors and therapists.

AmpSurf’s Surf Therapy focuses on stress release, coping self-esteem and discovering new values in life. With a lack of stimulus and extreme fatigue building because of stay at home orders, and other measures imposed by governmental agencies in response to COVID-19, our participants are experiencing extremely problematic home situations. With spouses/partners working at home, children being at home 24/7 and the need for homeschooling, these men and women are stuck in tension filled situations without any possibility to escape. It is a dangerous situation for our participants and for their family members.

It has been well established that adaptive sports have significant physical, psychological, and other benefits for participants. Participation in adaptive sports positively impacts individual’s self-esteem, self-concept and self-efficacy (Lundberg, Taniguchi, McCormick, & Tibbs, 2011) and increases perceptions of quality of life. (Arslan, 2013; Lundberg, Bennett, & Smith, 2011; Yazicioglu, Yavuz, Goktepe, & Tan, 2012).

Medical, rehabilitation, and mental health professionals are finding that involvement in adaptive sports can be an effective treatment modality for aging, post-discharge, and retired Veterans and an especially effective healing modality for Veterans with significant psychological and physical impairments. Veteran participation in sports promotes well-being and is effective for symptom reduction, particularly for Veterans with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (Caddick & Smith, 2014). Rogers, Mallison, and Peppers (2014) found that attendance rates in a surf program for Veterans with PTS were nearly double that of other mental health interventions for Veterans in general.

While many sports might be considered to be rehabilitative, adaptive sports, specifically surfing, may be best suited to meet these and other Veterans’ needs. The buoyancy of water provides an ease of mobility that may be challenging to obtain on land. The nature of the sport lends itself to relatively simple (non-labor intensive) adaptations, which facilitate a sense of well-being, freedom, and speed not easily attained elsewhere.

WHY SURFTHERAPY IS NEEDED. AND WHY IT CAN BE SAFE

- To prevent relapse, and the possibility of severe depression and possible suicide (attempts)
- To make sure our participants keep a high self esteem
- To provide prospective and to give new insights
- To relieve family members (informal care)
- COVID-19 Has a Half Life of >2 minutes in Sunlight (Bryan).
- PPE is easily worn while participating in Surf Therapy (Wetsuit, Gloves, and hoodies with mask)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONDITION</th>
<th>Temp</th>
<th>Humidity</th>
<th>Solar</th>
<th>HALF LIFE</th>
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<td>20%</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>18 hours</td>
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<td>70-75°F</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>6 hours</td>
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<td>95°F</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surface</td>
<td>70-75°F</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>2 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aerosol</td>
<td>70-75°F</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>~60 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aerosol</td>
<td>70-75°F</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>~1.5 minutes</td>
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</table>
AMPsurf provides dedicated care, based on recognized forms of therapy. All our care is provided by Certified Adaptive Instructors and takes Covid-19 social distancing measures into account.

Surf Therapy program during Covid-19
Total time of program: 2-3 hours

2-3 sets of 2 groups take part in every Surf Therapy session. These groups are not in contact with each other. Every group contains up to 3 participants with 1-3 instructors and volunteers. All our instructors are in possession of CPR/AED and First-Aid certificate.

Beach Instruction – (30 min) Set 1 Group 1 starts with an instruction session on the beach, taking the measures into account, without physical contact. During these sessions we talk about how to surf, existing problems and how to deal with them. We aim for higher self-esteem and resilience. The sessions are lead by a certified instructor.

Surfing - Set Group 1 starts surfing accompanied by a certified surf instructor (30 min). At this time Group 2 Starts Beach instruction (above).

Rest Period – Set 1 Groups 1 leaves water for rest, Group 2 rotates to Surfing.

Each Set of Groups does this one after the other.
M E A S U R E S

AmpSurf takes all imposed measures by the government into account. We also added extra measures to make sure our programs are accessible for everyone.

Manners

- Temperature checks will be conducted of all taking part in Surf Therapy Sessions. Those with temperatures of 100f/38c (a low grade fever) or above will be asked to leave.
- Gloves and face coverings will required at all events. Physical contact will be limited as much as possible during Surf Therapy programs.
- Mentors, instructors, therapists, volunteers and participants will keep their distance (at least 6ft/2m) as much as possible.
- We will not shake hands, give high fives or hugs during sessions.

Use of materials

- During surfing we use wetsuits that have been sanitized/disinfected using CDC guidelines (a bleach solution). The wetsuits will be sanitized/disinfected before use and after use. The wetsuits will only be used by one person per day.
- Changing stations will be used for participants to change their clothes. After changing, the Changing Station will be sanitized/disinfected with a bleach solution.
- All Surfboards will be sanitized/disinfected before use and after use.

If a person has mild cold-like symptoms, such as a sore throat, a runny nose, sneezing, a mild cough or a fever above 100f/38c (a low grade fever), they should stay at home until they are fully recovered. Anyone showing any symptoms will be politely asked to leave the venue.
References:
Brondsema (2020) – Survivor Netherlands Surf Therapy