



## What is Therapeutic Horseback Riding?

Therapeutic riding uses equine-oriented activities for the purpose of contributing positively to the cognitive, physical, emotional, and social well-being of people with special needs.

Therapeutic riding provides benefits in the areas of sport, recreation, education, and medicine to individuals with a wide range of disabilities.

## What are the benefits of Therapeutic Riding?

Physically, therapeutic riding can improve coordination and help normalize muscle tone.

Therapeutic riding can improve posture and increase the functional range of motion, muscular strength, and flexibility. Perceptual motor skills and sensory motor skills may also improve. The psychological benefits for the individuals who participate include improved motivation, self-esteem, and confidence. Therapeutic riding enhances the development of cognitive skills and allows the rider to improve socialization skills and learn teamwork.

## How do I qualify into the program at Free Rein?

You must:

- Be over the age of 3
- Weigh no more than 200 lbs
- Have sufficient balance to maintain a sitting posture on a horse
- Behave in a manner to maintain safety

The following conditions are contraindicated for therapeutic riding:

- Structural scoliosis >30 degrees
- Positive x-ray for atlantoaxial instability
- Tethered cord or chiari II malformation
- Hip subluxation, dislocation, or degeneration
- Spinal cord injury above T6
- Uncontrolled seizures
- Indwelling catheter
- Hemophilia

The following conditions may be contraindicated for therapeutic riding:

- Osteoporosis
- Heart condition
- Varicose veins

- Recurrent pathological fractures
- Osteogenesis imperfecta
- Diabetes
- Spina Bifida
- Spinal fusions/spinal instability
- Recent surgeries
- Lordosis or kyphosis
- Spinal stabilization devices

Free Rein Center may be unable to accommodate a potential rider due to resources available and program capabilities (i.e. horses, equipment, and availability of therapist involvement, volunteers, and instructor capabilities.) Free Rein Center follows PATH Intl. Precautions and Contraindication guidelines.

If you have any questions as to whether you may qualify to become a rider in our program, please contact

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