

Galileo improves neuroplasticity, increases strength, no matter the neural injury or diagnosis



NextStep Fitness

Redondo Beach, California

Training Products: Galileo Med S

Training Since: October 2013



The Facility

NextStep Fitness was founded by Janne Kouri after a diving injury in 2006 causing him to fracture his C5 and C6 vertebrae. Janne built NextStep into a nationally recognized non-profit that serves those living with paralysis and other physical disabilities by offering loco-motor and activity-based training at its state-of-the-art facility, NextStep Fitness, in Southern California.

NextStep is a proud member of the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation NeuroRecovery Network Community Fitness and Wellness Program. The fitness center serves individuals with paralysis and mobility impairments including stroke, spinal cord injury, multiple sclerosis, traumatic brain injury, cerebral palsy and Parkinson's disease. Patients participate in individualized programs designed with their conditions and fitness, health and wellness goals in mind.

The User Advantages

At NextStep Fitness, Galileo training is used daily, most often at the start of patient sessions, to awaken neuroplasticity and prepare clients for a range of training practices. Facility director and lead activity-based trainer Joel Wenger finds starting off patient sessions with Galileo improves blood flow and increases neural excitement in the spinal cord, no matter the injury or neural disorder being treated.



Most of Joel's clients incorporate Galileo training two to three times a week for 10 to 20 minutes at the start of their sessions. In general, he sees improvement in patient's ability to use functional tone, increased muscle strength, improved control of the trunk and greatly increased neuroplasticity. "We begin sessions with Galileo to create the neuroplasticity and then take advantage of those improvements during the session. Patients feel stronger and have more control over their limbs," Joel explains.

Joel sees a range of gains in patients using Galileo, varying by diagnosis.

In patients who have suffered a stroke, Galileo training is often used to improve hand strength, work on rotational strength and to improve control of limbs. Stroke patients typically use Galileo for 10 minutes. "What I find is that people have more connection to their limbs after using the Galileo. When they get off, there's increased blood flow and an increase in neurological signals," Joel describes.

For those with spinal cord injuries, Galileo provides improved control of tone and spasticity, improved blood flow and increased control of the trunk. "For example, over-activity of the ankles can flatten the feet because tone is overpowering the ankles. Using the Galileo plate helps relax the tone."

SCI patients use Galileo for 15 to 20 minutes at the start of the training session. "I consider it an overall way to make the body function better. The research is there with regard to the awakening of the spinal column to improve function, and that's exactly what we're seeing."

Patients with an MS diagnosis train on the Galileo for eight to 10 minutes. Joel says for these patients, Galileo is most often used to improve trunk control and to work on secondary issues that come from using a wheelchair. "I use it in a long seated position in combination with the Total Gym. It helps patients pull their pelvis forward, sit taller and generate strength in the extensors."

The Operational Advantages

Joel says the ease-of-use of the Galileo device is a great advantage as compared to other tools. "It's easy to move around the gym and to use in conjunction with other tools.

In fact, he finds Galileo compounds the benefits of other tools.

"Galileo works and we see the improvements we're looking for. It all comes down to neuroplasticity. It's waking up the spinal cord and patients are seeing more success," Joel explains.

"If I could have three pieces of equipment to start a gym, Galileo would be one of them. I feel strongly about it because it works."

Joel Wenger

facility director and
lead activity-based trainer



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