

Media Release  
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For Immediate Release

## AQUASSURE'S BATHTUBS ENABLE MORE INDEPENDENCE FOR PEOPLE WITH MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY

It is estimated that more than 50,000 Canadians are affected by a neuromuscular disorder. September is Muscular Dystrophy Awareness Month in Canada. Aquasure Accessible Baths, a Canadian manufacturer, makes a bathtub that has helped some MD sufferers maintain independence and quality of life.

“Muscular dystrophy is the name for a group of neuromuscular disorders that are characterized by progressive weakness and wasting of the voluntary muscles that control body movement. As muscle tissue weakens and wastes away, it is replaced by fatty and connective tissue.

Muscular dystrophies are genetic disorders. Forms of muscular dystrophy can be passed on from generation to generation, or they can occur spontaneously in a single individual as the result of a mutation of a particular gene. Contrary to popular belief, muscular dystrophy is not exclusively a childhood disorder - anyone can be affected. While some types of muscular dystrophy are first evident in infancy or early childhood, other types may not appear until later in life.” *Excerpted from muscles.ca website*

“Immersing the limbs and extremities in a bath improves your circulation and joint mobility, as well as reducing muscle tension. With regular hydrotherapy, people with muscular dystrophy can reduce reliance on muscle relaxants and sleep medication,” says Matthew Longman, RMT with Ethel Street Therapeutic Massage Clinic and CEO of Aquasure Accessible Baths.

Over time, persons with neuromuscular disorders may lose the ability to walk, speak, and ultimately breathe. For some individuals, the disorder is fatal. There is currently no cure.

Living with this disorder is difficult, with challenges for both the person with MD and for their caregivers. Mobility is affected, with joint and muscle pain, swelling, muscle cramping and difficulty walking and hand dexterity. With the loss of mobility and pain comes the loss of independence and a decline in quality of life. As symptoms progress the person with MD may go from needing a cane to a walker to a wheelchair. It is important that equipment and renovations accommodate the full range of mobility challenges, while maintaining as much independence as possible.

Aquasure's accessible bathtubs are part of a supportive equipment plan. Their tubs are accessible from walkers, wheelchairs and lifts and are retrofittable into home bathrooms. The person with MD will still be able to use the tub, regardless of how their illness progresses. The lever-handled fixtures are all ADA compliant with push-pull operation, no grasping and turning required.

Since a key component of MD is spasticity (muscle cramping), muscle pain, and swelling, most MD sufferers can benefit from soaking in warm water. Hydrotherapy provides warmth and relaxation to Soaking in warm water has many health benefits. The warmth and buoyancy combined with the water pressure can be extremely beneficial to muscular dystrophy sufferers. The water relaxes and supports muscles, reducing stress on the joints. Reduced muscle tension also improves circulation to the joints and extremities, further improving healing and mobility.

Because inflammation is involved in most forms of muscular dystrophy, treating the inflammation can help with pain and mobility. Edema (fluid accumulation/swelling) can be reduced by soaking in water - basically the water (hydrostatic) pressure forces the water out of your joints, and promoting healing. With reduced swelling, pain is alleviated. Soaking in a bathtub also signals the body that it is time to relax and sleep, further reducing pain.

Aquasure Accessible Bathtubs is a Canadian manufacturer of accessible slide-in bathtubs for people with mobility challenges. Their bathtubs are unique in that they are more accessible than walk-in tubs, so more people can use them. They are based in Kelowna, BC Canada.

**Resources:**

[www.muscles.ca](http://www.muscles.ca) – Muscular Dystrophy Canada

[www.mdausa.org](http://www.mdausa.org) – Muscular Dystrophy Association USA