

Physical Therapy basic level

Overview

The principles of physical therapy have been part of healing arts since recorded time. Physical therapy is an important part of a nonsurgical approach to restore, maintain, and promote overall health. Working with a doctor, a physical therapist (PT) will help patients who have suffered an accident, injury, or disease, or those recovering from surgery.

More about physical therapy

Physical therapists (PTs) evaluate an individual's movement, interaction of all parts of the body, and body types. They work in a variety of settings (e.g., clinics, hospitals, nursing homes, private offices) and with a variety of healthcare providers (e.g., doctors, nurses, occupational therapists). Some PTs specialize in rehabilitation for the back.

How can physical therapy help me?

Physical therapy can help restore function, relieve pain, and improve mobility. This therapy also helps restore muscle balance and good spinal alignment by:

- stretching tight muscles
- strengthening weak muscles
- restoring mobility to stiff joints
- relieving strain on ligaments

About your office visit

After reviewing your medical history, the PT will evaluate strength, range of motion, balance, coordination, posture, and more. With an understanding of body mechanics, the PT customizes a treatment plan to meet your needs. The goal is to improve function in your daily activities; the patient's progress in this way is carefully tracked.

Treatment may include exercises to stretch and strengthen muscles, and to improve endurance. Manual therapies include massage and mobilization. Other therapies may be electric stimulation, physical conditioning, ice/heat packs, and traction. Your PT may design a home exercise program, or teach you how to use devices like crutches, prosthesis, or wheelchairs if needed. Patient education may include good posture, safe work habits, and prevention of sports injuries. Recovery takes time and commitment, and varies with each patient.

What training do physical therapists have?

PTs have earned a bachelor's or master's degree, or both in physical therapy. National and state board examinations are required for licensing.

Finding a physical therapist

Mayfield doctors work closely with PTs who specialize in the treatment of back and neck problems. Our network provider list includes PTs located in Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana. Consult with your doctor and/or healthcare coordinator to choose a PT who may best meet your treatment needs.

Sources & links

If you have more questions, please contact the Mayfield Spine Institute at 513-221-1100 or 800-325-7787.

Additional information is available on the Web, such as, www.ptcentral.com and the American Physical Therapy Association at www.apta.org

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