

Why PTSRehab, Inc.

Physical Therapy FAQs

Frequently Ask Questions About Physical Therapy

1. Isn't physical therapy only for rehabilitation after surgery or injury?

Not at all. This is one of the greatest misconceptions about physical therapy. Physical therapists work in many areas involving overall health and wellness such as injury prevention for workers at their jobsites, athletes preparing for competition, and individuals of all ages who exercise for fitness. In any situation where you need your body to move and function at its best, a physical therapist can help.

2. Must you have a referral from your physician to see a physical therapist?

In the overwhelming majority of states you may seek the services of a physical therapist without a referral. If another health care provider refers you to physical therapy, keep in mind that you have the right to choose which physical therapist you would like to see.

3. Is physical therapy covered by insurance? What about if you are not referred?

The vast majority of insurance plans provide physical therapy benefits. The coverage amount may vary depending on the company and the specific plan. An insurer may require a referral in order to cover services provided by a physical therapist, and again this varies by region and by individual insurance plan.

4. How do you find a reputable physical therapist?

Finding a high-quality physical therapist is very important. You should always do your research before beginning any treatment plan or engage health care professionals or athletic trainers to assist you with movement and function. We recommend looking for an Optimum™ Care Provider -- these physical therapists use our OptimisPT software in their patient care, which assists them in choosing treatment methodologies that are based on evidence. To find your closest Optimum™ Care Provider, visit www.OptimisCorp.com. In addition, when meeting with a physical therapist for the first time, we recommend that you conduct an interview and get all your questions answered ahead of time. Unfortunately, many individuals who say they are providing physical therapy are not actually licensed physical therapists, so make sure you confirm that they are licensed.

5. How much does a typical physical therapy appointment cost?

This varies considerably by the region of the country and the setting in which the therapy is performed. Therapy charges are usually determined by the amount of time a therapist spends with you and the specific procedures used. Most clinics can give you an approximation of their average charge for whatever course of treatment you need. Keep in mind that, if they are contracted with your insurer, it isn't the charge that determines the price but rather the contract between your insurer and the facility.

6. **In what ways can a physical therapist help me?**

Physical therapists are experts in improving function and performance related to your ability to move. They can fully evaluate how you move and identify muscles that may be weak, motions in your joints or muscles that may lack normal flexibility and movements you might be performing in a less than optimal manner, which might predispose you to injury. After an evaluation, a physical therapist can set up a treatment plan to correct your areas of weakness, imbalance, inflexibility, or lack of coordination.

Many physical therapists also have expertise in creating strengthening, stretching and conditioning program.

If you do have an injury or require surgery, physical therapists are the rehabilitation experts that can help you get back to your desired activities and level of fitness in a safe and effective manner.

7. **If I need help with my fitness plan, is a physical therapist better than a personal trainer?**

Physical therapists are required to obtain significant training in musculoskeletal system conditions and disorders. Today's physical therapists graduate with seven years of college education and a Doctor of Physical Therapy degree. As such, they are also ideal health care advisers. Personal trainers typically have less training, including some certifications that are given out after a weekend program. Nonetheless, some personal trainers work closely with physical therapists to assist their patients in achieving their health and fitness objectives. Increasingly, however, physical therapists are directly available and are the better choice to assist you in developing goals, requiring flexibility, strength, and movement biomechanics. Physical therapists can design an exercise and fitness plan that will address your body's specific areas of need and will help you avoid injury as you work on improving your fitness level. This is not to take away from trainers. We just can't expect them to have the same expertise as a physical therapist. Many trainers and therapists will work together once your treatment plan is established and your therapist feels it is appropriate. Then, at that point, a personal trainer can be the perfect person to help you see it through.

8. **Every doctor has told me that my injury is going to prevent me from ever doing my favorite exercise - or even moving correctly - ever again. Can a physical therapist help me?**

Yes. Being the leading experts in movement and function of the body, physical therapists have the training to work with this type of problem. That is not to say that physicians are incorrect, but with proper rehabilitation, these problems can be overcome in many cases. If not restoring an ability to do a favorite exercise, therapists can help in establishing alternative exercises and activities.

9. I am getting older and my body just can't move like it used to. How can physical therapy help me?

Physical therapists can help you get moving again. The first step is to obtain a thorough evaluation. Individualized exercise programs can be developed to help you achieve your health and fitness goals. Physical therapists understand the changes that our bodies go through as you age and can guide you on how to accommodate to these changes.

10. My high-school aged son or daughter is so talented at their sport - how can a physical therapist help them to really excel?

First, therapists can perform sport-specific evaluations of your child and identify any strength, flexibility, or coordination deficits that could expose your child to injury or limit them from performing at his/her maximum capacity. Based on that evaluation, the physical therapist will collaborate with your child and develop a year-round fitness plan that includes specific activities for pre-season, in-season, and off-season. Not only can this help them excel, but is critical for injury prevention.

11. I have been overweight my entire life and get out of breath walking up the stairs to my front door. How can a physical therapist help me?

Working with your primary care physician, physical therapists can assist you with a graduated exercise and fitness program to improve your cardiovascular system and tolerance for activity. Physical therapists can also advise you on proper diet and nutrition and coordinate your treatment with a qualified dietician so that you have the knowledge and tools to begin to lose weight. As you progress, physical therapists can oversee your program and advance it or make any changes necessary to insure you are receiving maximum benefit from your diet and exercise program.

12. How does OptimisPT make my physical therapy experience better?

OptimisPT is an integrated scheduling, documentation, and billing system for outpatient physical therapy practices. This integration improves communication between the services provided to patients at the front desk, by physical therapists in the clinic, and by back office personnel managing any insurance claims processing. OptimisPT is an efficient documentation and report-writing system that enables the physical therapist to spend less time writing notes about the care provided and more time providing the care. In addition, there are many clinical support tools at the fingertips of a physical therapist using OptimisPT - such as integrated patient education, exercise handouts, and video clips that enable the therapist to easily send a recap of the instructions provided during the patient's visit directly to the patient's email address.

13. How does OptimisSport make my physical therapy experience better?

While there is a tremendous amount of sports and fitness information available, much of it is inaccurate and it is difficult for the average person to differentiate good from bad advice. Every

program in OptimisSport is based on evidence; OptimisSport programs are all developed with the top researchers and experts in their respective areas that have come together to develop their programs based on sound, scientific data. In addition, physical therapists and all professionals in OptimisSport have spent many years studying and training to be the best they can be, so that you receive the best care and guidance available.

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1401 Mercantile Lane, Suite 107, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20774

Telephone: 301-658-6881 Fax: 301-322-2563