

# Physical Therapy Frequently Asked Questions

## **What is Physical Therapy?**

Physical Therapy involves the direct treatment of physical injuries or “dysfunction.” We work to assist people in returning to their previous functional status. The emphasis is always on the goals that the patient has in mind. This can be as simple as returning to daily activities, or as advanced as retuning to sports activities. The goal of PT is also to educate the individual on the underlying cause of their symptoms/injury in order to help them prevent a recurrence of problems in the future.

## **Who can benefit from Physical Therapy?**

We work with individuals of all ages. When people think of PT, they often think that it is only for individuals who have had injury or surgery. We also work with individuals suffering from chronic aches and pains who have not had a specific injury.

## **What is involved in the Physical Therapy process?**

We use a very comprehensive approach in determining exactly what the individual will need to obtain the maximum benefit from their rehab. We do a thorough evaluation which involves discussing the history of the symptoms, and the functional limitations that are present. We then examine the body to look at strength, flexibility, and joint mobility, range of motion, posture, and body mechanics to determine what is contributing to the underlying symptoms. We then develop a program that addresses all of these specific findings. A customized Home Exercise Program is also developed that is given to the patient to perform when he/she is not in PT.

## **What do I need to do for my first visit?**

You need to complete all of the necessary patient registration forms on this site, bring your insurance card(s), your prescription and your referral (if required).

## **How long does the Initial Evaluation take?**

Plan on your first visit taking approximately 90 minutes. Your physical therapist will first evaluate your current condition. The therapist will then create an individualized program specific to your injury as well as design and instruct you on your Home Exercise Program.

## **How long will my follow-up visits take?**

After your Initial Evaluation, your standard visits will take approximately 45-90 minutes. Please note that there programs are individually customized, so each program will vary in time dependant of patient’s particular requirements.

**If I have questions about my Home Exercise Program, should I call or wait until my next visit?**

Please call our office if you ever have any questions regarding your treatment or your home program. We would prefer that you speak to your Therapist to confirm that you are doing your exercises properly. Doing your exercises properly will help avoid any further injury.

**How often will I need to come to Physical Therapy?**

Your therapy schedule will be constructed based on the recommendation of your doctor and the Therapist. People can either come in for a single visit to obtain a home program, or schedule a number of visits that often range from 12-24 visits. The average schedule is 2-3 times per week. It will all depend on the degree of injury/dysfunction and the available time of the patient.

**What should I wear to Physical Therapy?**

For your comfort and injury accessibility for the Therapist, we ask you to wear loose, comfortable clothing and gym shoes. Please be conscious of attire specific to your injury. Example: neck or shoulder injury, wear a tank top, knee or hip injury, wear shorts, etc

**Do you have a locker room?**

Each clinic does have a locker room where you can change and secure your belongings. Some clinics also have shower facilities.

**What are my benefits for Physical Therapy?**

Our staff will verify physical therapy benefits as a courtesy to you. Verification of benefits is not a guarantee of payment. You are responsible for your insurance coverage as well as for the payment of your account. You are responsible for any and all charges for professional services whether or not they are paid for the insurance carrier.

**Do I need a prescription?**

A prescription is not usually required. Although please note that some insurance carriers may require a prescription.

**What is a referral and how do I know if I need one?**

A referral is an authorization generated from your Primary Care Physician. The referral is on-file with your insurance carrier and is valid for a specified number of visits as well as a specific range of dates of service. It is the patient's responsibility to obtain the referral from you PCP.

**What is Pre-Certification?**

Certain types of plans stipulate that Pre-Certification is required for all therapy visits. Pre-Certification is authorization given by your insurance company after you Initial Evaluation to each patient for a specified number of visits. Pre-Certification is not a guarantee of payment.

**If I require Pre-Certification, am I responsible to acquire this from my insurance company?**

Our front office will submit the required paperwork to your insurance carrier.

**Should I let your office know when my next doctor's appointment is?**

Communication with your doctor is important to the Therapist. Please let your Therapist know one week in advance when you have a doctor's appointment. This will enable the Therapist to re-evaluate your progress and have a report available for your physician.

**What if I change insurance carriers during my therapy duration?**

Please let the front office know if you change your insurance carriers with as much notice as possible. Failure to have the correct billing information on file with our office may result in those visits becoming your financial responsibility.

**Keeping in touch?**

We always encourage an open line of communication. When a patient has ceased formal physical therapy, it is always recommended that they keep in touch with the physical therapist. This ensures that if the symptoms do recur, we can address them immediately instead of waiting for things to worsen.