

All About **PHYSIOTHERAPY**



FREEDOM TO FUNCTION!



PHYSIOTHERAPY IN ONTARIO

Physiotherapy is a rehabilitation profession with a presence in all health care delivery streams in Ontario: hospitals, long-term care facilities, home care, community-based clinics, schools, private practice clinics and primary care networks. It is regulated in Ontario under the Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA).

Physiotherapy is a drug-free health care practice and is the treatment of preference for many who suffer from:

- Back, Neck and Joint Pain
- Sports Injuries
- Spinal Cord Injury
- Motor Vehicle Accidents
- Chronic Disease
- Workplace Injuries

WHAT IS A PHYSIOTHERAPIST?

A physiotherapist (PT) is a university educated health professional and a recognized member of your health care team.

In Ontario, physiotherapists are licensed to practice by the College of Physiotherapists of Ontario. There are close to 7,000 registered physiotherapists in Ontario.

Physiotherapists apply knowledge, skill and judgment to promote health and to assess and break down the barriers that restrict physical function.

Physiotherapists work in many different areas including:

- Cardiorespiratory
- Orthopaedics
- Neurology
- Paediatrics
- Women's Health
- Seniors' Health
- Sports
- Research and Education



Physiotherapists also play an important role in health promotion and disease prevention and management.

A PT completes an extensive assessment that may include health history, evaluation of pain and movement patterns, strength, joint range of motion, reflexes, sensation and cardiorespiratory status. In addition, the PT examines relevant x-rays, laboratory tests, medical records and surgical notes.

Based on this assessment, physiotherapists establish a diagnosis and work in partnerships with patients to develop individualized goals and treatment programs.

PHYSIOTHERAPY TREATMENT

Treatment options might include:

- Therapeutic exercise
- Functional training
- Manual therapy
- Acupuncture
- Work hardening
- Techniques and modalities that reduce pain
- Corrective techniques to improve heart and lung function and cardiac conditioning
- Education

Physiotherapy has also proven to be effective in the treatment and management of arthritis, diabetes, osteoporosis, stroke and traumatic brain injury and a range of respiratory conditions offering those afflicted with the tools and techniques to acquire and maintain an optimum level of function and pain free living.

BENEFITS OF PHYSIOTHERAPY

Benefits of physiotherapy are numerous and may include:

- Reduced Pain
- Improved Mobility
- Increased Strength and Coordination
- Improved Cardiorespiratory Function
- Increased Independence

Physiotherapy can make a difference in an individual's ability to live an active, healthy lifestyle.

Physiotherapy is one way to successfully push physical limitations to secure the Freedom to Function™.

PAYMENT FOR SERVICES

With the continued cuts to publicly funded physiotherapy due to cost cutting by government and hospitals, more and more physiotherapy services are being privately funded. This means a shift away from OHIP-covered services and hospital clinics to private (out of pocket) sources of funding.

Many people either self-pay or have some coverage for physiotherapy through insurance plans. Insurers include the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) and insurance coverage through employer-provided or private Extended Health Benefits (EHB) plans and Motor Vehicle Accident (MVA) coverage through automobile insurers.

In hospitals, physiotherapy services are generally covered under the hospital's global operating budget.

OHIP funded physiotherapy is delivered in communities by Designated Physiotherapy Clinics (DPCs). OHIP covers physiotherapy treatment but does not cover the cost of assessment or re-assessment, so in many instances an additional assessment and/or administrative fee is charged to the patient.



In order to be covered for physiotherapy services at a Designated Physiotherapy Clinic, you must have a doctor's referral and one of the following:

- Be 19 years old or younger, or;
- Be 65 years old or older, or;
- Are receiving benefits under the Ontario Disability Support Program or Family Works, or;
- Have been overnight in a hospital for a condition that now requires physiotherapy treatment.

ACCESS TO PHYSIOTHERAPY

As primary care practitioners, physiotherapists do not require a physician referral for treatment. However, in order for physiotherapy services to be covered under OHIP or by some extended health insurance plans, you may require a doctor's referral.

In hospitals, physiotherapy services are provided to those admitted as in-patients or through out-patient programs. Check with your local hospital for what services are available in your area.

Long Term Care Homes may also offer physiotherapy services to their residents. PTs may be on staff, contracted into the facility from an outside company, or hired through private means by the family.

Home care physiotherapy is available through your local Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) for those who meet eligibility criteria. Contact your local CCAC for inclusion criteria or for any questions regarding home care physiotherapy services.

The majority of physiotherapy services available in the community are provided through private clinics.

To locate a physiotherapist near you, contact the Ontario Physiotherapy Association or visit the 'Find-a-Physio' link at www.opa.on.ca.



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