

What to Expect from Physical Therapy

Procedure: On your first visit the physical therapist will perform an evaluation which involves questions about why you have come and your medical history. The therapist will then do a series of tests and measures, such as checking your range of motion and strength. Following the evaluation the therapist will discuss a plan of care with you. You and your therapist will set goals for your treatment. How often you see the therapist will depend on your specific condition and your individual goals.

Goals: Generally, the first goal of treatment is to decrease any pain and swelling you may have. The next step is to increase your flexibility, and then increase your strength and endurance. As with any exercise, you may have mild soreness or swelling as a result of treatment, and these should be reported to your therapist. Your therapist will monitor your reaction to treatment and will adjust your sessions as needed. This ongoing assessment and adjustment means the risk of any injury or complication from physical therapy is lower.

Treatments: There are several types of treatments that a physical therapist may give you. They will depend on your problem or condition. They may include:

1. Modalities: ultrasound, hot or cold packs, electrical stimulation, traction.
2. Manual therapy: massage, joint mobilization, stretching.
3. Exercises: weights, machines.
4. Home exercise program.

Recovery: What can you expect from your recovery?

1. The body has a healing process of its own that is accelerated with physical therapy.
2. By following the Plan of Care and your therapist's instructions will speed your healing process and give you the best outcome.
3. You may experience some discomfort after each session, this is normal when treating injured areas; following your home instructions will help to lessen your discomfort.
4. The less you communicate with your therapist or if you do not follow your home exercise program, the longer your recovery will last.
5. Set backs in your recovery may occur and are normal; perseverance with your treatment will get you back on track.

What Your Physical Therapist Expects from You.

Because you are the primary focus of our care, your active participation is essential to a successful rehabilitation program. As our patient we expect the following from you:

1. Cooperate and follow your Plan of Care as prescribed by your therapist.
2. Keep all scheduled appointments or give us the courtesy of a phone call if you cannot make your appointment.
3. Participate to the best of your ability in each therapy session.
4. Comply with your therapist's treatment recommendations and exercises.
5. Report any significant changes in symptoms, medications and function.
6. Follow through with any prescribed home exercise programs.

Home Exercise Program: It is very important to note that physical therapy is typically expected to continue on an ongoing basis in the form of your **Home Exercise Program**. Most patients are discharged from therapy with instructions to continue with particular exercises at home. These exercises play an important role in preventing a recurrence of your injury and improving your overall health. The instructions you receive during therapy may be applied to flare ups and other injuries promoting quick recovery and lessen the severity of any problems.