

Do I need a referral from a doctor?

No. Physiotherapists are primary health care professionals (just like doctors and dentists) meaning you can go directly to a physiotherapist. You do not require a doctor's referral to see a physiotherapist. Insurance companies, however, sometimes require a doctor's referral before they will reimburse cost.

Will my insurance cover treatment?

Funding of physiotherapy services varies across Canada. Generally, treatments provided in a hospital setting are covered by provincial health insurance plans. Funding varies when services are offered outside a hospital. Be sure to ask your physiotherapist for details. Most insurance policies cover physiotherapy services. All provinces allow physiotherapists in private practice to bill clients directly or to bill third-party payors, such as insurance companies and workers' compensation boards.



What should I look for in a qualified physiotherapist?

Physiotherapists are credentialed, university-educated health professionals. Ask your physiotherapist about:

- 1 University degree in physiotherapy**
This includes, but is not limited to, the study of anatomy, physiology, pathology, human development, biomechanics and exercise physiology. Many physiotherapists also advance their education after university in areas such as: cardiorespirology, geriatrics, neurosciences, orthopaedics, paediatrics, rheumatology, sports physiotherapy and women's health.
- 2 Licence/Registration**
Physiotherapists are required to hold a license or registration to practice from the regulatory board of the College of Physiotherapy in your province/territory. These regulators set and monitor practice standards. Only registered physiotherapists are eligible to use the terms "physiotherapist", "physical therapist" and the professional designation "PT". Only registered physiotherapists are entitled to provide physiotherapy assessment, treatment or evaluation.
- 3 Membership in the Canadian Physiotherapy Association**
The Canadian Physiotherapy Association is actively engaged in dialogue on the future of health care in Canada and advocates for timely access to physiotherapy services on behalf of all Canadians. More broadly, the Association provides leadership and direction to the physiotherapy profession, fosters excellence in practice, education and research, and promotes high standards of health in Canada.

How can I find a physiotherapist near me?

To find a physiotherapist in your area, visit www.physiotherapy.ca, the official website of the Canadian Physiotherapy Association. Access the "Find A Physiotherapist" directory and explore links to provincial branches and regulatory colleges.

We invite you to learn more about the many ways physiotherapy is improving the health and mobility of Canadians. Be sure to visit our website for useful information and resources.

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Canadian
Physiotherapy
Association

Association
canadienne de
physiothérapie

PHYSIOTHERAPY ESSENTIAL TO YOUR HEALTH, MOBILITY AND INDEPENDENCE



What is physiotherapy?

Physiotherapy is the primary health care profession that promotes wellness, mobility and independent function.

Physiotherapists have advanced understanding of how the body moves, what keeps it from moving well and how to restore mobility.

Physiotherapy. It'll move you!

Can physiotherapy help me?

Physiotherapists manage and prevent many physical problems caused by illness, disability and disease, sport and work related injuries, aging, and long periods of inactivity.

Physiotherapists are skilled in the assessment and hands-on management of a broad range of conditions that affect the musculoskeletal, circulatory, respiratory and nervous systems. Here are some of the ways physiotherapy can help:



- Address physical challenges associated with pain, arthritis, repetitive strain injury etc.
- Assist in the management of incontinence
- Attend to sports injuries and provide advice on prevention and recurrence

- Help manage the physical complications of cancer and its treatment
- Manage and treat neck and back pain and other joint injuries
- Maximize mobility for clients with neurological disorders such as stroke, spinal cord injury or Parkinson's disease
- Oversee rehabilitation in the home after injury or illness
- Pre- and post-natal care and other women's health conditions
- Provide care for children with paediatric conditions such as developmental delay, fractures and cardiorespiratory conditions
- Recovery after surgery
- Treat and manage respiratory and cardiac conditions

How does physiotherapy work?

Physiotherapists assess and analyze the effect of illness, disability, injury and inactivity and develop specific treatment plans based on their assessment and the individual client's goals.

In order to maximize your health potential and minimize strains and stresses to your body, your physiotherapist will follow these four steps to get you moving as optimally as possible:

- 1 Assess your level of mobility, strength and endurance
- 2 Diagnose your condition and develop a treatment plan to restore movement and reduce limitations, including pain
- 3 Prescribe and demonstrate specific therapeutic exercises, monitor your progress over time, and adjust your treatment according to your needs and preferences
- 4 Prepare you for independence with advice on how to manage your condition, including education on complications and prevention of a recurring problem

Physiotherapists care about your goals!

Your physiotherapy treatment plan will be as unique and individual as you are, and your active participation will be essential for success.

Your physiotherapist will develop your treatment plan in close consultation with you and adjust it during the course of therapy in keeping with your goals and personal circumstances. Depending on your needs, your registered physiotherapist may draw upon a number of practice skills, such as:

- Corrective techniques to improve heart and lung function and cardiac conditioning
- Electrical modalities and acupuncture
- Manual therapy interventions to reduce pain and stiffness
- Posture and gait retraining and individualized conditioning regimes
- Techniques to correct muscle imbalances and postural alignment
- Techniques to improve movement coordination and balance
- Techniques and modalities that reduce pain
- Therapeutic exercise to build strength, flexibility and mobility



How will I know if it's working?

The goals you establish with your physiotherapist are used to measure your progress.

Your physiotherapist will be able to explain what aspect of your condition will be addressed first and how your treatment will progress. Throughout treatment, the physiotherapist will pay close attention to improvements in your symptoms and functionality, and remain attentive to your assessment of progress.

Some of the milestones you can use to evaluate your progress include:

- Ability to return to work, sports and other daily activities
- Distance you are able to walk, run, swim etc.
- How much you can lift or carry, e.g. groceries, baby, weights
- Increased motion and/or strength
- Improved endurance
- Length of time you are pain free and decreased pain intensity
- Overall improvement in quality of life

How accessible are physiotherapists?

Physiotherapy is the fifth largest regulated health profession in Canada. Physiotherapy is readily accessible as a primary health care service in all provinces and territories.

If you have been hospitalized, you may have seen a physiotherapist as an in-patient or after your discharge as an out-patient, for assistance in your recovery from injury, surgery, heart attack etc. Long-term care homes often provide physiotherapy to clients. As well, services are widely available in community clinics where physiotherapy, manual therapy, rehabilitation, and sport injury services are offered to individuals with or without medical referral.