

## PHYSICAL THERAPY

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**Appointment Date**

**Time**

Your recovery from pain or injury can be improved by learning new ways to strengthen your body and prevent future problems. A physical therapist can teach you ways to help reduce your pain now and form new habits to keep yourself healthy.

### **First Visit**

Your physical therapist (PT) will gather information about your condition. You may be asked questions about when and how it started, where you hurt, and how your symptoms affect your day-to-day activities. This helps your PT to focus on the source of your problem and to know what will be needed to help you.

Therapy Exam: Your PT will do an exam that may include some or all of the following checks.

- a. Posture – Imbalances in the position of your spine can put pressure on sore joints, nerves and muscles. Improving your posture can often make a big difference in easing pain.
- b. Range of motion (ROM) – Measurements are taken of how far you can move in different directions. Your ROM is recorded to compare how much improvement you are making with treatment.
- c. Nerve Tests – Your PT may do checks of reflexes, sensation and strength. The results can help determine the exact area of the problem and the types of treatment that will be best for you.
- d. Manual Exam – Your PT will carefully move your body in different positions to make sure that the joints are moving smoothly. Muscle and soft tissue flexibility is also tested.
- e. Ergonomics – This involves how and where you do your work or hobby activities. By understanding your ergonomics, your PT can begin to learn if the way you do your activities is affecting your condition.
- f. Palpation – This involves feeling the soft tissues around the problem area. This is used to check the skin for changes in temperature or texture as well as tender points or spasms in the muscles near the problem area.

Care Plan: Your PT will evaluate your answers and your exam results to determine the best way to help you. The PT will then write a plan of care which lists the treatment to be used and the goals that you and the PT decide on. The plan also includes how well the PT thinks the treatment will work and how long you'll need therapy in order to get the most benefit.

Treatment: The main goal of therapy is to make sure that you have ways to take care of future pain or problems. You'll be shown ways to help control pain or symptoms. Because you've experienced pain, there is a possibility that you may have soreness in the future. You may be encouraged to continue with some of the exercises to help keep your body healthy over time.