

Physical therapy

Physical therapy / physiotherapy (PT) is defined as a healthcare profession that remediates impairments and promotes mobility, function, and quality of life through examination, diagnosis, and physical intervention. More specifically, it can be described as the rehabilitation of physical impairments by training and strengthening a patient's large muscles – those in the arms, legs, and abdomen.

It is carried out by physical therapists, who are also known as physiotherapists, and physical therapist assistants. In addition to clinical practice, other activities, such as research, education and consultation, are encompassed in the physical therapy profession. In many settings, physical therapy services may be provided alongside, or in conjunction with, other medical or rehabilitation services, including occupational therapy.

Physical therapists work with people to help them meet the challenges they face related to their injury or illness, such as ALS, cerebral palsy and spina bifida. In addition, all treatment is designed to emphasize physical fitness, and minimize injuries and pain. This is achieved not only by developing strength and flexibility in the body, but also using adaptive techniques or equipment that can be operated by the patient.

The equipment, which is often utilised in exercises, may include weights, exercise machines, bands, rollers, balance balls, heat and cold packs and ultrasound technology.

At some centres, sports or recreation like swimming, dancing and playing games such as throwing and catching a ball, may be used to help patients develop muscles, balance, coordination and range of motion.

Compiled and adapted from: <https://www.cerebralpalsy.org/about-cerebral-palsy/treatment/therapy/physical-therapy> and <https://www.disabled-world.com/medical/rehabilitation/therapy/physical.php>