



CPTBC

College of Physical Therapists
of British Columbia

what is physical therapy ?

Physical therapy focuses on improving the overall strength and movement of your body. The ultimate goal is to improve your ability to carry out everyday activities by reducing pain or increasing mobility.



A physical therapist can work with you to:

- ✓ Reduce pain and swelling
- ✓ Improve or restore your ability to move
- ✓ Increase your strength
- ✓ Strengthen the skills needed to do activities such as return to work, or care for yourself or others
- ✓ Improve the quality of your daily life

To help you reach these goals, a physical therapist may use:

- Specially designed exercises
- Hands-on therapy
- Treatment methods such as ice or heat
- Equipment and devices such as ultrasound or muscle stimulation



what can I expect from a physical therapist?



will I be asked to remove some clothing at my appointment?

Depending on what the problem is, you might be asked to remove some clothing or change into a gown. This allows the physical therapist to see your posture, feel your muscles, and test the movement of your joints.

To examine and treat you, the physical therapist might need to touch you and position themselves close to you.

If it makes you more comfortable, you can bring a friend or family member with you.

If you feel uncomfortable at any time, let your physical therapist know. Be sure to inform them of any cultural practices they need to honour. Remember: You can say "No" to any part of your therapy.



The first step is assessment. When you first visit a physical therapist, they will:

- Talk to you about the history of the problem you're experiencing
- Examine your muscles and joints to assess your movement and strength
- They may also do some on-the-spot tests and take some measurements

Once the assessment is complete, your physical therapist will:

- Explain their initial thoughts and findings with you
- Discuss possible goals and treatment options available
- Work with you to make a plan based on your goals
- Monitor your progress and modify treatment as needed

One key aspect in all physical therapy is education. Throughout your treatment, your physical therapist will teach you:

- about your body and how it moves
- how to do exercises safely and effectively
- how to manage your condition and prevent future problems

Throughout your care, your physical therapist keeps a written record of your treatment. If needed and you agree, the physical therapist communicates with others involved in your care.

Physical therapists are registered healthcare professionals who specialize in how the human body moves. They treat people who have pain and/or weakness from health conditions, injuries, or disabilities.



what is a

physical therapist
assistant?

Some physical therapists have physical therapist assistants working for them. An assistant's work is always directed and closely supervised by the physical therapist. Assistants can help with exercises and other treatment activities. The physical therapist might assign part of your therapy to the assistant, but only after you have talked about this and agreed to it.



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If you have any questions about your physical therapist or about physical therapy in general, contact us at 604-742-6556, or 1-833-742-6556.

