


WHAT SERVICE DO I NEED?

Distinguishing between Physical and Occupational Therapy can be challenging! For example, if your child is struggling to brush their teeth, either service might be right for you depending on the particular skill that they are struggling with. Please see below for a breakdown of this example:




BIG MUSCLE SKILLS




Big muscle skills (like lifting your arms and standing with your legs) are improved through physical therapy!

SENSORY PROCESSING




Sensory processes (like tolerating the feeling of toothpaste in your mouth), can be supported through occupational therapy!

SMALL MUSCLE SKILLS



Small muscle skills (like gripping a toothbrush with your fingers) are improved through occupational therapy!

BALANCING SKILLS



Balance tasks (like sensing balancing to stand) can be improved using either physical or occupational therapy! However, if balance is more of a muscle issue (like utilizing both sides of your body to remain upright), then physical therapy might be right for you.

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PHYSICAL THERAPY

What is Physical
Therapy and how can it
help my child?

FOR AUDIO LEARNERS!



Follow QR code for
information about PT in video
format by the American
Physical Therapy Association

WHAT IS PHYSICAL THERAPY?

WHAT DOES PHYSICAL THERAPY DO?

Physical Therapy (PT) develops a person's gross motor skills!

WHAT ARE GROSS MOTOR SKILLS?

Gross motor skills are big movements that use large muscles like the torso, legs and arms. Examples of gross motor skills include:



HOW TO BUILD GROSS MOTOR SKILLS:

Gross motor skills are built through stretches and exercises! In some cases, mobility equipment like wheelchairs and walkers can be utilized to support a person's natural mobility.

PT personalizes stretches and exercises in order to build gross motor skills for the individual. When in PT, your Physical Therapist will walk you through each exercise and teach you how to practice at home!



P.T. SUPPORTS

Physical Therapy can prescribe different supports in order to help them engage with their environment. Once your support arrives, your physical therapist will help teach you how to use it in the home. Below are some examples of common supports:

SUPPORTIVE EQUIPMENT

Supportive equipment, like wheelchairs, gait trainers and walkers, help your child navigate their environment.



ORTHOTICS

Orthotics, like splints and braces, can help by supporting weaker joints and muscles! They are often used to improve toe-walking and limps.



PRACTICE AT HOME!

New movements are hard to learn! Because of this, it's best if physical therapy skills are practiced all the time. Because your child spends most of their time at home, this means that the skills practiced in physical therapy are most effective when they are practiced outside of session and in the home setting with parents and caregivers.



P.T. UNDER 3

Physical Therapy will look different for children under 3. This is due to the unique developmental milestones for this age. Milestones and motor functions that PT might address for babies and toddlers include sitting, crawling, holding up the head, walking, picking up items, engaging with toys (like throwing balls) and using small stairs!

