

FAST FACTS: Physical Therapy/Occupational Therapy

Physical Therapy (PT) and Occupational Therapy (OT) are types of rehabilitative care. PT focuses on restoring or improving movement, strength, and range of motion. OT aims to improve the motor skills your family member needs to perform daily tasks.

✓ Physical Therapy (PT)

- Useful to assist with pain control following an injury or with long-term pain (chronic pain).
- Focuses on regular exercise and includes flexibility, aerobic, and strengthening exercises.
- Will include a series of visits to a physical therapist.
- Your family member should also plan to practice the exercises directed by the PT at home for best results.

✓ Occupational Therapy (OT)

- Focuses on making adaptations to the work or home environment that make tasks easier.
- Because pain can impact your family members normal activities, the OT may suggest assistive devices to help manage pain and make activities easier, such as a cane or walker or a jar opener for joint pain, etc.



✓ What Else You Should Do

- Encourage your family member to try a non-drug treatment and document the impact on their pain in their Pain Diary.
- Write down and share information about your family member's pain with their healthcare provider.
- Use a [Pain Diary](#) to note important information useful to your family member's healthcare provider.

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Resources

Mayo Clinic (2018). Pain rehabilitation: *Nondrug options for managing chronic pain*.

<https://newsnetwork.mayoclinic.org/discussion/pain-rehabilitation-nondrug-options-for-managing-chronic-pain/>.

WebMD (2021). *Physical Therapy for Chronic Pain: What to Expect*. <https://www.webmd.com/pain-management/physical-therapy>.

WebMD (2021). *What is Occupational Therapy?* <https://www.webmd.com/pain-management/occupational-rehab>.