



What Is the Role of Occupational and/or Physical Therapy?

What is an occupational therapist (OT)?

An occupational therapist works with people in order to increase independence with daily activities, such as self-care and homemaking. In order to see an occupational therapist the patient will need a referral from his/her doctor.

Treatment focus for fall prevention may include:

- Improving activity tolerance or endurance-help people improve their endurance and plan ahead to avoid fatiguing in the middle of an activity.
- Teaching adaptive techniques-for energy conservation, simplifying tasks and using adaptive equipment.
- Educating on pain management-help decrease muscle or joint pain to help better manage pain in order to do exercises.
- Teaching and practicing with a person who has fallen what to do in case of a fall, including how to get up if a fall occurs.
- Helping to identify risk factors in the home and provide suggestions on making things safer.

What is a physical therapist (PT)?

A physical therapist works with people to improve mobility. This may be bed mobility, wheelchair mobility, or walking with or without a device. Just like with OT, the care recipient will need a referral from his/her doctor to see a physical therapist.

Treatment focus for fall prevention may include:

- Improving sitting or standing balance
- Mobility training-stairs, curbs, getting in and out of cars
- Increasing endurance-being able to move yourself for greater periods of time without fatigue
- Muscle strengthening-home exercise programs that can be completed daily to improve or maintain strength and flexibility



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- Education on pain management (as described in the above OT section)

How can you find a physical or occupational therapist?

- Ask your doctor. He or she may know of one in the hospital or clinic.
- Look in the attached list of resources or check the yellow pages or internet for clinic or hospital near you.