

Therapeutic Exercise

Therapeutic exercise maybe defined as the prescription of bodily movements to correct an alignment, improve musculoskeletal function or maintain a state of well-being. It may vary from highly selective activities restricted to specific muscles or parts of the body to general and vigorous activities to restore a patient to a peak physical therapy condition. It may be used to reduce pain, increase or maintain mobility of joints and soft tissue, improve the mobility of the body in different positions or postures as well as improve ambulatory abilities. It can be used to improve the range of motion through stretching and active exercise and assist in the development of neuromuscular coordination, balance, strength and endurance.

Therapeutic exercise may be delivered through passive, active assistive, active and resistive exercises. The exercise prescription will be given and performed in the clinic through the direction of the physical therapist. A home exercise program will also be given with the patient being responsible to follow through with the home exercise program as a means of improving possibility of a successful treatment of their condition.

Precautions for therapeutic exercise occur when circulation is reduced or when there is impaired pain or sensation. Caution is also used with people who have heart disorders, breathing disorders, neuromuscular conditions that result in fatigue or an increased possibility of falls. In addition, exercise treatment with fractures and dislocations extreme caution is used. Pain can accompany certain forms of therapeutic exercise and is an indication for discontinuing exercise or limiting exercise. The patient should notify the physical therapist when the exercises are causing pain.

Conditions treated by therapeutic exercise include: When relief of pain is desired, when mobilization of the contracted joint or tissue is desired, muscle issues, sprains, strains, bruises, tendon and/or nerve disorders, and injuries.

The physical therapist will use their sound professional judgment in the use of exercise being performed.

The physical therapist anticipates beginning improvements in the respective condition in 1 to 8 treatments with the resolution usually occurring in 8 to 12 treatments. Treatments consist of approximately 8-15 min. of technique, depending on the exercise.

Alternatives to therapeutic exercise include modalities, manual therapy and medications prescribed by your physician.

The patient has the right at any time during the treatment to stop treatment and question the physical therapist whether to continue treatment or ask questions about the treatment.