

Q&A: What is a Physical Therapist (PT) and an Occupational Therapist(OT)?

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These two licensed professionals are often misunderstood.

Physical therapists will address a persons impairments and functional limitations within a **musculoskeletal system** in order to help reduce pain, improve mobility and quality of life. Physical therapists can be found in a variety of settings including but not limited to orthopedic, pediatric, wound care, acute care setting and women's health. These therapists are also qualified to recommend assistive devices, educate regarding body mechanics and injury prevention with a focus on reducing impairments, balance training, functional mobility training and gait training.

Occupational therapists also address functional limitations and impairments but they focus more on **activities of daily living** including dressing, bathing, toileting, writing, etc. They can recommend adaptive equipment to help with activities of daily living, can build splints for positioning and work on upper extremity dexterity. Occupational therapists can also be found in a variety of settings. Both occupations, similar but distinct in their own profession, can be found working together in a multidisciplinary approach in order to help a person achieve greater functional mobility overall.