DOCTOR PHYSICAL THERAPY (DPT)
WHAT IS PHYSICAL THERAPY?

Physical therapy is a type of treatment you may need when health problems make it hard to move around and do everyday tasks. It helps you move better and may relieve pain. It also helps improve or restore your physical function and your fitness level.

The goal of physical therapy is to make daily tasks and activities easier. For example, it may help with walking, going up stairs, or getting in and out of bed.

Physical therapy can help with recovery after some surgeries. A doctor may suggest physical therapy for injuries or long-term health problems such as arthritis or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

Physical therapy may be used alone or with other treatments.
WHO ARE PHYSICAL THERAPISTS?

Physical therapists (PTs) are highly-educated, licensed health care professionals who can help patients reduce pain and improve or restore mobility - in many cases without expensive surgery and often reducing the need for long-term use of prescription medications and their side effects.

Physical therapists can teach patients how to prevent or manage their condition so that they will achieve long-term health benefits. PTs examine each individual and develop a plan, using treatment techniques to promote the ability to move, reduce pain, restore function, and prevent disability. In addition, PTs work with individuals to prevent the loss of mobility before it occurs by developing fitness- and wellness-oriented programs for healthier and more active lifestyles.

Physical therapists provide care for people in a variety of settings, including hospitals, private practices, outpatient clinics, home health agencies, schools, sports and fitness facilities, work settings, and nursing homes. State licensure is required in each state in which a physical therapist practices.
WHERE DO PHYSICAL THERAPISTS PRACTICE?

Although many physical therapists practice in hospitals, more than 80 percent practice in:

• Outpatient clinics or offices
• Inpatient rehabilitation facilities
• Skilled nursing, extended care, or subacute facilities
• Homes
• Education or research centers
• Schools
• Hospices
• Industrial, workplace, or other occupational environments
• Fitness centers and sports training facilities
IS PHYSICAL THERAPY RIGHT FOR YOU?
A FEW PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS FOR HAPPINESS AND SUCCESS IN THE PT FIELD

- Excellent communication skills required for teaching patients, interacting with other health professions, engaging in advocacy for society and for the profession, and participating as a shared partner on health care teams.
- Genuine caring and compassion to make a difference in the lives of others, whether it be in their overall health and wellness or in providing rehabilitation for an injury, genetic disorder, or chronic condition.
- Integrity in all that they do whether providing patient documentation, billing for services provided, or a commitment to advocate for the needs of their patients/clients and society.
- Compelling need for maintaining lifelong learning to ensure that their knowledge and skills are contemporary in the interest of providing evidence-based care and best practice to meet the needs of patients/clients.
- Ability to function both as a competent practitioner with patients individually as well as a team member in providing interprofessional collaborative patient-centered care.
- Flexibility/adaptability to changes at the micro and macro levels with organizations and health care systems.
COURSE PREREQUISITES

ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY
DPT programs may require applicants to complete an anatomy or physiology course in a biology, neuroscience, anatomy, or integrated physiology department. Many programs will accept two combined anatomy and physiology (A&P I and A&P II) in lieu of separate anatomy and physiology courses.

- 98% require at least one course in anatomy, physiology, anatomy & physiology I (A&P I), or anatomy & physiology II (A&P II).
- 2% do not require a course in anatomy, physiology, anatomy & physiology I (A&P I), or anatomy & physiology II (A&P II).

PHYSICS
- 100% require one or more courses in physics.
- 0% do not require a course in physics.

MATH
- 24% require one or more courses in math
- 76% do not require a course in math

SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES
Applicants may be required to complete particular social and behavioral courses or may be permitted to complete any courses in the subject. Psychology is a type of social and behavioral science. Programs commonly allow applicants to substitute specialized psychology courses (e.g., abnormal) for general psychology courses.

- 94% require one or more courses in psychology or social/behavioral science
- 6% do not require a course in psychology or social/behavioral science

CHEMISTRY
- 98% require one or more courses in chemistry.
- 2% do not require a course in chemistry.

STATISTICS
- 96% require a course in statistics
- 4% do not require a course in statistics

BIOLOGY
- 86% require one or more courses in biology or biological science.
- 14% do not require a course in biology or biological science.

STATISTICS
- 96% require a course in statistics
- 4% do not require a course in statistics
TOP PHYSICAL THERAPY PROGRAMS IN THE US
ACCORDING TO US NEWS AND WORLD REPORT

University of Southern California
University of Delaware
University of Pittsburgh
Washington University in St. Louis
University of Iowa
U.S. Army-Baylor University
Emory University
MGH Institute of Health Professions
Northwestern University
University of Miami

Grad-Schools.USNews.RankingsandReviews.com/Best-Graduate-Schools/Top-Health-Schools/Physical-Therapy-Rankings
MOST IDENTIFIED MAJORS FOR ACCEPTED PTCAS APPLICANTS

Some applicants in PTCAS designated multiple majors or minors. Graph above includes information based on all majors designated. MAJOR categories are not mutually exclusive. If an applicant enters the same MAJOR for multiple colleges and/or degrees, the MAJOR will be counted as many times as it is listed.
# SAMPLE CURRICULUM
FROM USC DIVISION OF BIOKINESIOLOGY AND PHYSICAL THERAPY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fall</strong></td>
<td>Evidence for Physical Therapist Practice</td>
<td>Cellular &amp; Systems Physiology</td>
<td>Musculo-skeletal Anatomy</td>
<td>Basics of Patient Management</td>
<td>Mechanics of Human Gait</td>
<td>Clinical Imaging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spring</strong></td>
<td>Therapeutic Exercise</td>
<td>Analytical Anatomy</td>
<td>Clinical Biomechanics</td>
<td>Evidence for Physical Therapist Practice</td>
<td>Disorders of the Musculoskeletal System</td>
<td>2-Week Midterm Clinical Practicum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summer A</strong></td>
<td>Principles of Disease</td>
<td>Special Topics in Therapeutic Exercise</td>
<td>Therapeutic Application of Physical Agents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summer B</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6-Week Clinical Affiliation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fall</strong></td>
<td>Neuro-anatomy</td>
<td>Pathology of Cardio-Pulmonary &amp; Medical Conditions</td>
<td>Pharmacology</td>
<td>Clinical Exercise Physiology</td>
<td>Clinical Management of Cardio-Pulmonary Dysfunction</td>
<td>2 Week Midterm Clinical Practicum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spring</strong></td>
<td>Neuro-pathology</td>
<td>Neuroscience Fundamentals</td>
<td>Clinical Management of Neurologic Dysfunction</td>
<td>Clinical Electro-physiology</td>
<td>Evidence for Physical Therapist Practice</td>
<td>Week Midterm Clinical Practicum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summer A</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6-Week Clinical Affiliation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summer B</strong></td>
<td>Lifespan Motor Control</td>
<td>Evidence for Physical Therapist Practice</td>
<td>Differential Diagnosis in Physical Therapy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year 3</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>16-Week Full-Time Advanced Clinical Clerkship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PT.USC.edu/Education/Programs/PhysicalTherapy/DPT/Curriculum/
FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

American Council of Academic Physical Therapy:  ACAPT.org
American Physical Therapy Association:  APTA.org
Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education:  CAPTEOnline.org
The Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy:  FSBPT.org
Move Forward:  MoveForwardPT.com
Physical Therapist:  PhysicalTherapist.com
Physical Therapist Centralized Application Service:  PTCAS.org