



Preparing for your Physiotherapy visit

Physiotherapists are highly educated, licensed health care professionals who help patients improve or restore mobility, and in many cases helping patients reduce pain, and avoid the need for surgery and the long-term use of prescription medications and their side effects.

Physiotherapists examine, evaluate, and treat patients whose conditions limit their ability to move and function in daily life. Your physiotherapist's overall goal is to maintain, restore, or improve your mobility and help reduce your pain.

Making an appointment with a physio at Barker Inc. is uncomplicated and is not necessary to have a doctor's referral. Whether this is your first visit, or you've been treated by a physiotherapist in the past, there are things you can do to make your visit as successful as possible.

Before Your Visit:

It really helps if you have thought about your health before you come. Jotting down some of these things can help you remember. Your therapist may ask you about each of these things. Make a list of any questions that you have, to make the best use of your time with your physiotherapist.

Write down any symptoms you've been having and for how long. If you have more than one symptom, begin with the one that is the most bothersome to you. For example, is your pain or symptom:

- Better or worse with certain activities or movements or with certain positions, such as sitting or standing?
- More noticeable at certain times of day?

- Relieved or made worse by resting?

Write down key information about your medical history, even if it seems unrelated to the condition for which you are seeing the physiotherapist. For example:

- Make a list of all prescription and over-the-counter medications, vitamins, and supplements that you are taking.
- Don't forget that your eating pattern is important. Make a list of the foods and drinks that you consume each day
- Make a note of any important personal information, including any recent stressful events, injuries, incidents, or environmental factors that you believe might have contributed to your condition.
- Make a list of any medical conditions of your parents or siblings.
- Consider taking a family member or trusted friend along to help you remember details from your own health history and to take notes about what is discussed during your visit. Make sure you can see and hear as well as possible. If you wear glasses, take them with you. If you use a hearing aid, make certain that it is working well, and wear it. Tell your physiotherapist and clinic staff if you have a hard time seeing or hearing. If available, bring any lab, diagnostic, or medical reports from other health care professionals that may be related to your medical history or who have treated you for your current condition.
- Bring a list of the names of your physician and other health care professionals that you would like your physiotherapist to contact regarding your evaluation and your progress.

When you call to make your appointment, ask whether you should wear or bring a certain type of clothing when you come for your first visit. You may want to avoid tight or formal clothes; in case the therapist wants you to engage in activities during the first session.

Financial Considerations

- Barker Inc. use the South African Society of Physiotherapy's schedule of fees. This is a fair and affordable schedule supported by our professional body. Be sure to ask questions if anything is unclear. request it be provided and explained prior to the initiation of treatment.
- When you come for your first session, will ask you to sign the financial agreement. Review the agreement carefully and ask questions if anything is unclear.
- We will give you a copy of our financial T&C. There may be some co-payments will be requested prior to or upon completion of each appointment. It is important to pay the proper amounts at the time of service. This will help you to better manage your health care costs and avoid a large bill at the end of care.
- If the frequency of visits needs to be adjusted for financial reasons, discuss this directly with your physiotherapist. In partnership with your therapist, you can explore alternatives and develop a workable plan.
- If you change medical aid plans or lose medical coverage for any reason, be sure to inform your therapist as well as our front office staff.

What to Expect During Your First Visit:

Your physiotherapist will begin by asking you lots of questions about your health and about the specific condition for which you are seeing the physiotherapist. Detailed information about you and your condition will help the physiotherapist determine whether you are likely to benefit from physiotherapy and which treatments are most likely to help you.

Your physiotherapist will perform a detailed examination. Depending on your symptoms and condition, the physiotherapist might evaluate your strength, flexibility, balance, coordination, posture, blood pressure, and heart and respiration rates. Your physiotherapist might use his or her hands to examine

or "palpate" the affected area or to perform a detailed examination of the mobility of your joints, muscles, and other tissues. You will need to expose the affected area so that you can be professionally assessed.

Your physiotherapist also might evaluate:

- How you walk (your "gait")
- How you get up from a lying position or get in and out of a chair ("functional activities")
- How you use your body for certain activities, such as bending and lifting ("body mechanics")

Your physiotherapist might ask you specific questions about your home or work environment, your health habits and activity level, and your leisure and recreational interests so that the therapist can help you become as active and independent as possible.

Your physiotherapist will work with you to determine your goals for physiotherapy and will begin to develop a plan for your treatment. In many cases, the physiotherapist will make a diagnosis and begin treatment almost immediately.

One of the main goals of treatment is almost always to improve or maintain your ability to do your daily tasks and activities. To reach this goal, the physiotherapist may need to focus on pain, swelling, weakness, or limited motion. Your physiotherapist will constantly assess your response to each treatment and will adjust as needed.

In most cases, an important aspect of your physiotherapy treatment will be education. Your physiotherapist might teach you special exercises to do at home. You might learn new and different ways to perform your activities at work and home. These new techniques can help minimize pain, lessen strain, avoid reinjury, and speed your recovery.

Your physiotherapist will evaluate your need for special equipment, such as special footwear, splints, or crutches. If the evaluation indicates that you are at risk for falling, your physiotherapist might recommend simple equipment to help make your home a safer place for you. The therapist will know what

equipment you need and can either get it for you or tell you where you can find it. If you do need special equipment, your physiotherapist can show you how to use it properly.

Your physiotherapist will communicate the important information from your examination to your doctor and to other health care professionals at your request.

Your physiotherapist will continually recheck your progress and work with you to plan for your discharge from physiotherapy when you are ready. Make sure you talk with your physiotherapist about what you should do after discharge if you have questions, or if your symptoms or condition worsen.

Keeping Your Appointments

- Arrive for treatment sessions at the scheduled time or a few minutes early so you are prepared. Late arrival may affect not only your 1-on-1 time with the therapist, but that of other patients in the practice.
- Actively participate in the discussion to determine visit frequency and work in partnership with the physiotherapist to achieve your treatment goals.
- Show up for appointments. Failure to show for an appointment and not calling to cancel the visit may result in a fee and is disruptive to the physiotherapist's schedule. If an emergency prevents you from attending, try to provide adequate notice. It is important to review the facility's financial and cancellation policy prior to the start of treatment.
- If you plan to discontinue therapy or change the frequency of treatment because of personal or financial considerations, discuss this with your physiotherapist.

You will get out of therapy what you put into it. Enough effort, as agreed between you and the physiotherapist, is necessary to maximize benefit from each treatment session.

Observe all precautions as instructed by your physiotherapist. This may include modifying an activity, reducing weight on 1 limb while walking, avoiding certain movements, or restricting use of a specific body part. Lack of

compliance with treatment precautions may cause injury and result in delayed recovery.

If special devices such as splints, walkers, canes, or braces are provided for home use, follow the physiotherapist's exact instructions. Be sure to ask questions if the instructions are unclear, as incorrect use may be harmful.

The therapist may advise physical modifications in your home such as removing throw rugs, rearranging furniture, and installing safety rails. For your safety, it's essential to comply with these recommendations.

Follow the home program as instructed by the physiotherapist. Your ongoing performance and commitment to the home program is essential to your recovery.

If the instructions are unclear, ask for clarification. Only perform exercises at the therapist-specified repetition, frequency, and resistance (such as weight or resistance band colour). More is definitely not always better and may cause injury!

After your physiotherapy care is completed, continue to follow the after-care instructions provided by the physiotherapist.

Changing the Rehabilitation Setting

Physiotherapy can occur in a variety of settings including hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, rehabilitation facilities, at home or in an outpatient clinic. Depending on your condition and recovery, your medical team may recommend your transfer from one setting to another. For example, if you are discharged from the hospital, physiotherapy treatment may be continued in an inpatient rehabilitation facility, your home, or an outpatient clinic depending on the level of care you need.

It is important that your rehabilitation be disrupted as little as possible during the change in setting. If you are returning home from another facility, ask the physiotherapist what special equipment or family support is needed prior to the transfer.