

What you should know about Multiple Sclerosis Physical Therapies

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Introduction

Physical therapy can be beneficial in assisting people with multiple sclerosis in managing their illness. It has several advantages, including strengthening the body, avoiding symptoms from worsening, and assisting a person in regaining lost function. Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a central nervous system illness in which the immune system attacks the protective covering of the nerves, known as myelin [1].

Electrical signals can travel swiftly across the nerves because to myelin. When myelin is injured, it develops scar tissue, which interferes with the brain's impulses. Pain, slowed coordination, and exhaustion are just a few of the symptoms that might result from this disruption.

MS is divided into four categories, each of which progresses in a different way. The type of MS a person has, as well as other circumstances, will determine the exact pattern of MS throughout their lives. The pattern is unexpected and differs from person to person. Because there is no cure for MS, treatment usually focuses on reducing the disease's development. Physical therapy, for example, is one type of rehabilitation therapy that can help alleviate MS symptoms. Physical therapy can help a person learn about their body, cope with changes in their body, and maintain their independence [2].

Physical therapy for MS is discussed in depth in this page, including why it is beneficial, how it works during different phases of MS, and where to receive treatment.

What is Physical Therapy?

Physical therapy is a type of non-invasive treatment that aids in the relief of pain and the improvement of physical function. The aims of physical therapy will vary depending on the individual and the cause for their treatment. Regaining physical function after an accident or retraining a muscle to move correctly is examples of goals [3].

To achieve these goals, physical therapy typically incorporates exercises, stretches, and manual treatment.

What are the Benefits?

Physical therapy assists patients with MS in adapting to changes as the disease progresses.

Exercise can assist people with MS by:

- Reducing symptoms or making them simpler to manage, according to an article published in the journal *Lancet Neurology*.
- Restoring the functionality
- Improving overall health

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- Improving one's quality of life
- Increasing amounts of physical activity

Experts indicate that exercise and physical therapy are safe for persons with MS, and that they can help at any stage of the condition, from preventing it from developing to treating symptoms. They do, however, point out that patients with MS are less physically active than other groups [4,5].

People with MS may be able to enhance their overall levels of physical activity by following the structure of a physical therapy programme. These programmes do not overwork or put a person in danger. Instead, they concentrate on the needs and objectives of each individual. These may include:

- Improving a person's gait pattern (the way they walk)
- Avoiding exacerbating symptoms
- Being able to adjust to bodily changes
- Improving or alleviating specific symptoms, such as muscle spasms
- Increasing range of motion and flexibility
- Correctly using movement equipment, such as canes, mobility scooters, or other aids following a relapse

A specialist can assist in customising a physical therapy programme to meet a person's specific needs. Personalization may make them more likely to continue with the programme in the long run.

What role does it play at different stages?

Physical treatment is critical for people with MS at any stage. The particular aims of physical therapy will, however, be determined by the stage of the disease. Following the diagnosis, initially, physical therapy may entail informing the patient about this sort of treatment and how it can aid in the treatment of MS.

A physical examination will be required to create a baseline for the individual's fitness levels and to identify areas for improvement. Physical therapy will focus on recovering physical function as soon as possible during and after a relapse. In each scenario, the appearance of this can be rather different. Following a relapse, some people may find it difficult to perform basic chores like walking or cooking.

To assist the client regain function, the physical therapist will work closely with them. They may do a new physical examination and compare it to the previous one, then use the results to create a programme that restores the person's function.

Making a Treatment Plan

It is critical for each person diagnosed with MS to cooperate closely with their specialist as soon as possible after their diagnosis. This allows the specialist to maintain track of the disease's course and give physical treatment recommendations.

The therapy approach will be tailored to the precise areas of mobility that a person struggles with. If the person's condition changes, the physical therapist will adjust it over time.

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