

Physical Therapy

Definition

The art and science of eradicating or easing pain and improving bodily function by direct physical means, both hands-on and conservative modalities without the use of drugs.



2351 Energy Drive 1001
Baton Rouge LA 70808
phone: (225) 927-3000

10343 Siegen Lane 3-A
Baton Rouge, LA 70810
phone: (225) 767-4440

30789 La. Hwy. 16 D-2
Denham Springs, LA 70726
phone: (225) 664-9150

FOOT & ANKLE PAIN



**Physical Therapy
for Foot & Ankle Pain**

Why Try PT First?

The goals of physical therapy are to restore flexibility, strength, and normal motion in the muscles and joint to allow better movement without the stress that causes foot and ankle pain.

Physical therapists (PTs) are highly trained to identify the faulty moving components, caused by weak or tight muscles that can stop or change normal motion and cause pain. Using the wide array of treatments including ice, heat, hands on manual therapy, exercises and education your PT can help you to recover pain free movements.

As a result, you not only function better but have reduced pain and discomfort as well as the tools to prevent further injury and pain.

Types of Foot and Ankle Pain that Physical Therapy (PT) may help:

1. If you experience sharp pain in the heels and arches when bearing weight may indicate a condition known as **plantar fasciitis**. This is an inflammation of the connective tissue layers that runs across the bottom of the foot and arches to the bottom of the heel.
2. Pain or soreness with movement and/or swelling on the back of your ankles are symptoms of **tendinitis**. Tendons are the thick



cords connecting bone to muscle. As tendons age they become less flexible and easier to tear, causing tendinitis.

3. Dull aches or sharp pains through the bottom of your foot and numbness in your toes are indicators of **metatarsalgia**. Metatarsalgia is the impingement of nerves in the feet.
4. Aches and pains in the front of your lower legs can be symptoms of **shin splints**, which is a general term covering injury and/or overuse of the lower leg and surrounding tissues.

What Treatment Should You Expect?

1. **Modalities** or the use of heat, cold, electricity etc. may be used to help decrease the pain you are experiencing, improve your circulation and/or help the muscles relax. This is usually done as a preparation for doing exercises or activities to improve strength and flexibility.
2. **Hands-On Manual Therapy Techniques** are very specialized techniques done by physical therapists using their hands in precise ways to relax muscles in spasm, lengthen tight muscles, restore balance in the area and improve the motion and function of feet and ankles.
3. **Exercises** will be used to aid your recovery. The goal is to improve your body's ability to hold onto the changes the therapy makes, to stabilize and support your foot and ankle and make you strong and flexible so that you will be protected from further injury. Exercise will help you get back to a level of daily activity that restores your quality of life at home and at work.
4. **Posture and/or Body Mechanics Education** will help you use safer positioning of your body during daily activities. This can not only aid your recovery but can help you prevent further injury.

What Should You Do Before Your PT Appointment?

1. Follow any advice that your doctor gives you.
2. Rest with your feet elevated as much as possible to

give your feet a chance to heal.

3. Apply ice to reduce swelling and to ease pain.
4. Avoid activities or shoes that may cause pain in your feet and ankles.

What Should You Expect at Your First PT Visit?

Paperwork: On your first visit to our clinic there will be some paperwork to complete regarding your medical history. This will enable the physical therapist to develop an appropriate treatment plan. Also insurance information will be collected at this time

Evaluation: Your physical therapist will be doing a full evaluation of your condition on your first visit. What the PT will be looking for is any loss of normal motion, flexibility or strength in your feet and surrounding areas that could be causing your pain. The PT will evaluate how this is affecting the function of your whole body during daily activities.

Proper Attire: You should come dressed so that you can move about as comfortably as possible whether standing, sitting or lying down.

Our feet carry us through our lives, to work, to school, and to play. If you have been living with foot pain and want to change your quality of life, or just want relief from the daily pain call your PT today to set an appointment. The sooner that you ask your PT for help and start to manage your pain the better the outcome will be.

