

CAREER OUTLOOK

As more of this generation moves into late middle age or old age, they are more susceptible to diseases such as arthritis, stroke, heart disease, and other conditions common in older people. Many of these conditions include physical therapy as a recovery or treatment option. Also, because the nation's population is increasing its participation in sports and physical activities, more physical therapists will be needed to treat and help prevent knee, leg, back, shoulder and other musculo-skeletal injuries.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

American Physical Therapy Association
1111 North Fairfax Street
Alexandria, VA 22314-1488
Phone: (800) 999-2782
Phone: (703) 684-2782
Fax: (703) 684-7343
Web: www.apta.org

MS Physical Therapy Association
921 North Congress Street
Jackson, MS 39202-2554
Phone: (601) 354-3629
Fax: (601) 355-1506
E-mail: insightltd@msn.com



MHA HEALTH CAREERS CENTER

6425 LAKEOVER ROAD (39213)
P.O. Box 16444
JACKSON, MS 39236-6444
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PHYSICAL THERAPIST

POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES

Physical therapists help patients recover from illnesses and injuries. After evaluating the physicians' referral and the patients' medical records, they plan, administer and conduct physical therapy treatment for patients in order to restore muscle function, relieve pain, and prevent disability following disease, injury, or loss of body parts. Physical therapists treatment program may include exercise, electrical stimulation and ultrasound message therapy. They also instruct and motivate patients in isometric and ambulatory exercises. They evaluate the effects of each treatment and adjust the treatment regimen to achieve maximum benefits. Physical therapy is used to improve the patients' endurance, coordination, increase strength, decrease pain, and prevent further injury. They also work with the patients to overcome the emotional and physical barriers that may hinder recovery.

An individual interested in becoming a physical therapy assistant must have a willingness to work with ill and disabled people on a regular basis. They must also be physically and mentally fit in order to fulfill the demands of the profession. This profession requires good communication skills, creativity, physical dexterity and coordination, organization, and self-motivation.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Most physical therapists work in hospitals, rehabilitation centers, clinics, physician offices, nursing homes, home health agencies, adult day care programs, schools, wellness and community centers, and in private industry.

HIGH SCHOOL PREPARATION

Students who want to become physical therapists should take the most challenging high school courses including biology, chemistry, medical assisting, algebra, trigonometry, health occupations /medical professions education, computer skills, humanities, and geometry.

COLLEGE REQUIREMENTS

To become a physical therapist, an individual must complete a four-year degree, graduate from an accredited school of physical therapy with a Master's degree and pass an examination. Students interested in physical therapy should contact schools for information on admission and course of study.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

University of MS Medical Ctr.
2500 North State Street
Jackson, MS 39216
Phone: (601) 984-1080

SALARY RANGE

Average Annual Salary--\$55,270
Salary Range--\$47,050 to \$72,100

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Employment opportunities for physical therapists are expected to grow by approximately 30% over the next 10 years. This growth rate is faster than the growth for all other occupations in the United States. This increase in the demand for physical therapists is due to the aging baby boomer generation.