



THE CHARTERED SOCIETY OF PHYSIOTHERAPY

# MOVE with the times

## Where can I receive treatment?

You'll find chartered physiotherapists in NHS and private hospitals, health centres, GP practices, industry, schools, leisure centres and some will visit you in your own home.

The majority of physiotherapists work in the NHS, but others have their own private practices. You can make an appointment directly with a chartered physiotherapist yourself, or your GP can refer you. You can search for a physiotherapist in private practice in your area by using the CSP's online search facility Physio2U at: [www.physio2u.org.uk](http://www.physio2u.org.uk). When choosing a physiotherapist make sure they have the initials MCSP (Member of the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy) after their name. This will guarantee that they are properly qualified, governed by a professional code of conduct and covered by professional liability insurance.

The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy is the professional, educational and trade union body for the United Kingdom's 45,000 chartered physiotherapists, physiotherapy students and assistants

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Chartered physiotherapists offer advice and treatment for a range of health problems to help you make the most of your lifestyle





**They say that you're as young as you feel. As you get older though, your body will change. Wear and tear can take its toll on muscles and joints, restricting your ability, and you might encounter medical problems that limit your movement. The good news is physiotherapy offers an effective way to help many of the problems you may experience.**

Whether you're notching up the years yourself or caring for an older friend or relative, you'll know the discomfort and frustration that can be caused by the following:

- > The decline in free and independent movement because of stiffer joints or weakened muscles
- > The difficulties balancing and the anxiety and fear of falling, which prevents participation in usual activities
- > The debilitating physical effects of stroke, Parkinson's disease and other long-term conditions.

Of course, none of these problems are inevitable, although age may increase their likelihood. But help is at hand through physiotherapy.

Physiotherapy can help:

- > Aid recovery after illness or injury – an important factor in helping you remain active and independent
- > Improve your balance and muscle strength to avoid falls – the biggest cause of hospital admissions for older people
- > Improve confidence and reduce the fear of falling
- > Teach you how to get off the floor again following a fall
- > Overcome the physical limitations caused by stroke and other neurological conditions
- > Reduce breathlessness or teach you how to move to conserve your energy if needed
- > Get you back on your feet after a hip fracture
- > Ease shoulder, neck, hip and back pain and help restore movement
- > Promote healthy choices, which enable older people to continue to lead active lives.

Physiotherapy can significantly improve the quality of your life.

## What is physiotherapy?

Physiotherapy is primarily the use of physical means to restore reduced or impaired activity.

### Assessment and treatment

Physiotherapists provide an assessment and then use a variety of techniques to help muscles and joints work to their full potential. Exercise can be adapted to improve mobility of individual joints and to strengthen muscles. This can help make activities like walking easier, and is particularly beneficial for people with arthritis and osteoporosis or those recovering from a hip fracture.

Physiotherapy can also help reduce the pain and stiffness that often results from these conditions.

### Re-education

Patients who have had strokes or other disorders of the nervous system often lose movement in certain parts of their body. Through appropriate exercise and improving balance, physiotherapists can help the body re-learn basic movements, making people less dependent and enabling many to continue living

independently in their own homes. This kind of support is also important for patients who are weaker and less mobile following a spell in hospital.

### Prevention

We all know prevention is better than cure – and it's often the simple things that make the difference. Physiotherapists can advise on muscle strengthening exercises to avoid falls, good footwear and, when necessary, appropriate walking aids. Even positioning your pillows correctly can ease neck pain when sleeping.

## What does the treatment involve?

The physiotherapist will assess your condition to identify any problems. They will then work with you to decide what action to take. This will take into account your general health and normal daily routine. The physiotherapist will be keen that you are able to stay in control and manage your own recovery. For example, you may be shown exercises that you

can do safely on your own. Where appropriate, physiotherapists also advise carers on how they can help.

Treatments may include:

- > **Exercise programmes** – helping you improve your mobility and strengthen your muscles
- > **Hydrotherapy** – showing you how to exercise in water
- > **Manipulation and mobilisation** – intervention to reduce pain and stiffness
- > **Electrotherapy** – for example, ultrasound to speed up the healing process
- > **Acupuncture** – some specially trained physiotherapists use this technique to alleviate your pain
- > **Massage** – for relaxation or to ease muscle tension
- > **Advice** – on ways to reduce the risk of falling.

You may only need to see a physiotherapist once or twice, or you might require more support. If necessary, a physiotherapist may be able to see you in your home.