

The Similarities and Differences Between Occupational, Physical and Speech Therapy

Anyone recovering from illness or injury or dealing with disease and disability can benefit from OT, PT and ST to perform their daily lives more independently and safer, bringing a higher quality of life.

Similarities:

- All 3 can be available in many different settings including hospitals, outpatient clinics, in the home, in schools, and long-term care facilities.
- All 3 can improve the ability to perform your daily activities and as well as other things you do to improve your quality of life.
- All 3 can provide you with strengthening, stretching and coordination activities to achieve your goals.
- OT and PT can work together for pain management, splinting and prosthetic training.

Differences:

Occupational Therapy (OT)

- OT provides services to improve physical, cognitive, and environmental barriers that affect a person's ability to participate safely and independently at home with activities of daily living, home management, driving, and community access.
- OT helps develop and practice new strategies and using adaptive equipment, if needed, to perform activities of daily living.

Physical Therapy (PT)

- PT helps enhance mobility and quality of life by maximizing your ability to get around at home, in the community, and in the activities that you are involved in such as work, sports and hobbies.
- PT helps improve muscle strength, endurance, flexibility, balance and posture.

Speech Therapy (ST)

- ST works to prevent, assess, diagnose, and treat speech, language, cognitive-communication, and swallowing disorders.
- Cognitive-communication difficulties are addressed by assessing and providing intervention in the areas of attention, memory, problem solving, organization, and executive functioning.
- Swallowing disorders are frequently referred to as dysphagia. The speech therapist helps to determine the patient's safety with oral intake, and makes recommendations on strategies including diet modifications, postural changes, and maneuvers relating to the swallow.

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