

	Clinical Protocol: Physical Therapy	
	ORIGINAL EFFECTIVE DATE: 03/28/2011	REVIEWED/REVISED DATE(S): 06/18/2019 08/13/2021
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PROTOCOL OVERVIEW

This Clinical Protocol advises on guidelines and indications for Physical Therapy.

INDICATIONS

- 1) Physical therapy is considered medically necessary when:
 - a. Preventing disability or restoring function impaired as a result of acute illness, injury, surgery, loss of a body part or congenital abnormality
 - b. Unique skills of a therapist are required as part of an active skilled plan of individualized treatment
 - c. There is expectation of rapid practical improvement
 - d. Function could not reasonably expect to improve as the individual resumes normal activities
 - e. Restoration potential is significant in relation to extent and duration of therapy.
- 2) Physical therapy is considered not medically necessary when:
 - a. Used to prevent or slow deterioration in function
 - b. Used to prevent reoccurrences
 - c. Intended to improve or maintain general condition or enhance athletic performance.
- 3) Indications for discontinuation of therapy:
 - a. Achievement of goals
 - b. Attainment of maximal potential for improvement
 - c. A medical condition precludes therapy
 - d. Lack of documented evidence of measurable improvement.
- 4) Upon approval of initial request, authorization will generally be granted for evaluation along with a series of therapy sessions to teach a home program. If additional professionally supervised therapy is later needed, a provider may document medical necessity and request such therapy.

CITATIONS

MCG, 23rd Edition, “Low Back Pain and Lumbar Spine Conditions”, 2/26/2019

Anthem, Clinical UM Guidelines, CG-REHAB-04, “Physical Therapy”, 10/13/2010

Cigna, Medical Coverage Policy, policy 0096, “Physical Therapy”, 9/15/2010

Health Net National Medical Policy, NMP218, “Physical and Occupational Therapy”, July 2010

Aetna, Clinical Policy Bulletin, policy 0250, “Occupational Therapy Services”, 4/28/2009