

What is a Physical Therapist?

Physical Therapists (PT) are movement experts who improve quality of life in children and adults through prescribed exercise, hands-on care, and patient education. PTs examine each person and develop a treatment plan to improve their ability to move, reduce or manage pain, restore function, and prevent disability.

What is the role of the Physical Therapist at the Complex Concussion Clinic?

At the Complex Concussion Clinic (CCC), the PT works with clients to improve neurological, orthopedic, and/or cardiovascular problems that result from a mild traumatic brain injury (mTBI) or concussion.

- These problems can include:
 - Dizziness
 - Headache
 - Fatigue
 - Light sensitivity
 - Noise sensitivity
 - Nausea
 - Decreased balance
 - Pain

What can be done to improve physical symptoms and exercise tolerance after mTBI or concussion?

- Rest and recovery - Educate when and why activity should be limited and when it is safe to return to those activities
- Restoring strength and endurance - Create an individualized exercise program and closely monitor symptoms throughout the program
- Reducing dizziness and improving balance - Help reduce or stop dizziness or balance problems through specific exercises, some of which will need to be performed at home in addition to during PT sessions
- Improving headaches - Assess the cause(s) of headaches and treat them through exercise, manual interventions, and specific modalities
- Returning to play - As symptoms improve, the PT will determine readiness to return to the pre-injury activities in collaboration with the athletic trainer and physician



What might a Physical Therapy session look like at CCC?

Session activities vary based on each patient's needs and goals. Below are examples of interventions that might occur during a PT session at CCC:

- Supervision during a typical workout with customized coaching to determine when to rest and de-escalate any symptoms
- Monitoring symptoms during sport-specific activities such as passing a ball or weaving through cones
- Balance training drills
- Manual therapy to manage pain or headache coming from the neck
- Habituation to bothersome triggers such as a busy visual environment, a moving video, or head movements

Additional Comments: