

Things you might not know about our non-physician professional colleagues

PHYSICAL THERAPY

Education, training, certification

- » Bachelor's degree
- » Post-baccalaureate degree
- » Transitioning so that all graduates must complete doctorate degree (DPT)
- » State licensures

Subspecialties

- » Sports PT
- » Women's health/pelvic PT
- » Neurology
- » Pediatric
- » Geriatric

Types of pain best for a PT approach

- » Back pain
- » Joint and muscle pains
- » Some chronic headaches
- » Sports injuries
- » Some pelvic, perineal, and anal pain

Active modalities

- » Movement based, such as stretching and range of motion exercises
- » Specific strength exercises
- » Pain-related exercises
- » Low-impact aerobic conditioning

Passive modalities

- » Manual therapies
- » Heat/ice packs
- » Electrical stimulation, including TENS
- » Ultrasound
- » Dry needling

Top five things our physical therapist colleagues would like you to know

- » In California, patients can self-refer directly to PT's ("direct access")
- » Some insurers encourage self-referral to PT for initial evaluation and treatment by waiving deductibles and copays for first few visits. (Decreased overall costs shown)
- » PT's are expert at initial evaluation, diagnosis and treatment planning
- » Many PT's use a "bio-social" approach, integrating the psychological and social factors that influence pain and its relief
- » Some new primary care group models include PT's as members of the primary care team

CHIROPRACTIC

Education, training, certification

- » Bachelor's degree
- » Four-year chiropractic doctoral training (DC)
- » Two-part national board examinations
- » Continuing education same as MD/DO – 24 hours per year
- » Multiple areas of subspecialty training, including radiology, neurology, sports/team doctor, nutrition, and exercise rehab

Subspecialties

- » Sports / team doctor
- » Radiology
- » Neurology
- » Nutrition
- » Exercise rehab
- » Occupational Health

Types of pain best for chiropractic approach

- » Neck and back/disc pain
- » Headache/migraine
- » Sciatica
- » Joint and extremity pain
- » Torticollis

Top five things our chiropractic colleagues would like you to know:

- » Chiropractic is concerned with the relationship between structure and function
- » The nervous system is vulnerable to interference from tissue changes that cause fixations of surrounding bony structures
- » Three causes of fixation are mechanical, chemical, and emotional
- » Acute fixations, without chronic associated degenerative changes, respond more quickly
- » Chiropractors may make recommendations regarding diet, exercise, and stress release to restore normal nervous system function and general health

continued on back

MENTAL HEALTH – PSYCHOLOGISTS, LCSW, AND LMFT PAIN SPECIALISTS

Education, training, certification

- » Varies by degree – PhD, LCSW, LMFT
- » PhD
- » LCSW
- » LMFT-Master’s in clinical psych, counseling psych, transpersonal psych
- » Each of these degreed counselors require at least 3,000 hours of supervised clinical experience prior to taking licensing exam
- » License is renewed every 2 years with required CE Hours
- » State licenses and continuing education

Pain-related areas of strength and expertise

- » These professionals deal with the social component of chronic pain, pacing activities, challenging negative, and limited thinking, cultivate a healthier relationship with the body
- » Individual and group therapy

Top five things our therapist colleagues would like you to know:

- » Therapists emphasize the role the participant plays in their own healing, as part of the team:
 - » Addressing “learned helplessness” allows participant to develop an empowering stance
 - » Guided Visualization participants learn to listen to their body and begin to feel empowered rather than victimized by their body betrayal
 - » Using the mind-body connection, therapists help patients develop techniques to reduce stress, develop resiliency — thereby increasing hope
 - » Working with the Power of the Mind, therapists reframe negative thoughts, challenge catastrophic thinking, and address cognitive distortions
- » Group interventions help to mitigate social isolation and depression and help participant gain perspective regarding their pain. Participants say:
 - » “It’s a relief to come here and share with others who ‘get it’. It saves lives — Without this, I could have done myself in.”
 - » “Pain is a teacher – forces one to look within... look at mortality.”
 - » “Group is like a cool drink of water.”
 - » “Power is fellowship. Camaraderie, friendships are built. Despair has been lost since attending.”
 - » “Group has helped more than anything. Brings positive energy. Puts pain in perspective.”
- » Many people who suffer from chronic pain have traumatic pasts. Using EMDR and other techniques to provide a corrective emotional experience can be very effective in their healing
- » Developing a daily schedule with clients provides a disciplined approach to managing pain through pacing, exercising and stretching, relaxation, coping techniques, and setting realistic goals
- » Therapists engage in education about diet, nutrition, and sleep hygiene

ACUPUNCTURE

Education, training, certification

- » Bachelor’s degree (some graduate schools allow associates degree), RN or MD
- » Master’s degree or doctorate, from a school of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) or Traditional Oriental Medicine. Top-ten U.S. schools include two in our area — Five Branches University in Santa Cruz and American College of Traditional Chinese Medicine in San Francisco
- » California state licensure

Types of pain amenable to acupuncture

- » Consider for all types of pain, acute and chronic — especially low back, neck, shoulder, knee pain, headache, dysmenorrhea, and fibromyalgia.
- » Acute injury healing, such as the pain and swelling of sprains — avoids progression to chronic state
- » Adjunct to physical therapy — allows improved patient participation

Top five things our acupuncture colleagues would like you to know:

- » Acupuncture has been utilized for approximately 2,000 years. The exact mechanism of action, and in some cases the efficacy for specific conditions, remains somewhat controversial
- » The traditional language of TCM can be confusing for Western medical professionals — resist the temptation to try to translate it literally
- » Many patients find acupuncture helpful for things other than pain, such as: vertigo, asthma, Bell’s Palsy, anxiety, insomnia, and URI symptoms
- » Effectiveness for a given patient can usually be determined within 3–6 weekly visits
- » Acupuncture treatment is covered by many, if not most, insurances (including Aspire Medicare Advantage). It is considered a cost-effective alternative