

Understanding Physical Therapy

Physical Therapist vs. Chiropractor

If you've ever suffered an injury, odds are you've listened to a friend wholeheartedly recommend something that helped them recover from a similar (or not so similar) injury. They may advise you to seek out a regular routine with a physical therapist. Maybe a friend knows a Chiropractor who "works wonders". In many cases, people are unable to make an informative decision on which of the two can provide the best care. Here are a few facts to help you better understand what works best for your injury.

	Physical Therapist	Chiropractor
Roles (according to American Physical Therapy Association and American Chiropractic Association)	Examines individuals with impairments, functional limitations, disability or health related conditions. Determines diagnosis, prognosis and intervention Prevents injury, promotes maintenance of fitness, health, better quality of life Consultation, education and research	Drug free, hands on approach to Healthcare Recommends therapeutic and rehabilitative exercises Nutritional, dietary counseling "Spinal manipulation"
Specialties	Orthopedics, Pediatrics, Geriatrics, spinal injuries, wound and burn management, cardiopulmonary, Neurological	Orthopedics, Pediatrics Geriatrics, spinal injuries
Training and Certification	3 academic years in DPT program 2 years graduate for Masters of PT 1 year (minimum) clinical internship Certified by Commission on Accreditation in PT Education	At least 3 academic years and 3 years training 1 year internship Certified by the Chiropractor's Board at State Level
Treatment	Manual therapy techniques, soft tissue therapy, joint manipulation, neuromuscular reeducation, gait training, counseling, cardiopulmonary endurance training, therapeutic exercises, etc	Spinal adjustment, soft tissue therapy, strength training, electrical stimulation, counseling on health and diet, etc

The truth is that every person and every injury is different. What works for one person may not work for (or may even cause further injury to) another. Always make sure to consider a doctor's opinion before consulting with friends.