Debunking 7 Physical Therapy Myths

MYTH 1  I need a physician’s referral to see a physical therapist.
FACT 70% of consumers think a physician’s referral or prescription is required to be evaluated by a physical therapist.

MYTH 2  Physical therapy is painful.
FACT Physical therapists work within a patient’s pain threshold. Almost 71% of people who have never visited a physical therapist think physical therapy is painful. That number significantly decreases among patients who have seen a PT in the past year.

MYTH 3  Physical therapy is for injuries and accidents.
FACT Physical therapy is a diverse health care practice that helps prevent injury and pain, and promotes mobility, health, and wellness. Although 81% of consumers recognize the diverse skills of a physical therapist, 19% still think physical therapy is only for rehabilitation.

MYTH 4  Any health care professional can perform physical therapy.
FACT Physical therapy should only be performed by a licensed physical therapist. 37% of consumers think a physician’s referral or prescription is required to be evaluated by a physical therapist.

MYTH 5  Physical therapy isn’t covered by insurance.
FACT Most insurance policies cover some amount of physical therapist services. The majority of consumers realize that most insurance plans cover some of their physical therapy costs; however, 19% still believe insurance companies cover no PT services.

MYTH 6  Surgery is my only option.
FACT In many cases, physical therapy has been shown to be as effective as surgery. 79% of those who have recently seen a PT believes that physical therapy is an alternative to surgery.

MYTH 7  I can do physical therapy myself.
FACT Only a licensed physical therapist with specialized education and expertise can develop a physical therapy plan of care. 58% of consumers either think they can do physical therapy on their own, or are unsure.

Myths: Physical therapy is painful. Myths: Any health care professional can perform physical therapy. Myths: Physical therapy isn’t covered by insurance. Myths: Surgery is my only option. Myths: I can do physical therapy myself.