

PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT

Is being a Physical Therapist Assistant for me?

The field is for you if you ...

- Enjoy working with people in a health care setting.
- Have excellent interpersonal skills.
- Have a strong academic background, particularly in sciences.
- Can assume responsibility and follow through to completion.
- Have excellent written and oral communication skills.
- Are willing to attend continuing education classes to keep current in the field.
- Desire a career with a good salary and job prospects.

What skills will I need for this field?

Physical therapist assistants utilize therapeutic exercise, mobility training, patient education, therapeutic massage and physical agents such as heat, cold, water, and electricity in the treatment of patients with physical disease and disability.

Goals of treatment may include relieving pain, improving strength and mobility, and attaining a maximum level of function for a particular patient.

What is the work atmosphere like?

Physical therapist assistants and physical therapists work in a variety of settings, such as hospitals, outpatient clinics, skilled care facilities, pediatric facilities, rehabilitation centers, fitness centers, home healthcare agencies and school systems. A licensed physical therapist assistant works under the direction of a licensed physical therapist.

What are my degree options?

Associate's Degree

Associate in Applied Science (AAS)

Professional Licensure

In most states, including Illinois, physical therapist assistants must pass a state licensure examination in order to practice. Students must graduate from an accredited program in order to sit for the state licensure examination.

What are my career opportunities?

Physical therapist assistants may become involved in clinical education. Physical therapist assistants may enhance their education and clinical skills following graduation by taking continue education in a variety of specialized areas such as orthopedics, sports medicine, pediatrics and geriatrics. Supervisory and management responsibilities may be available within any of the clinical settings. There can be durable medical equipment sale vending opportunities. Some physical therapist assistants enter private practice, especially through the establishment of outpatient clinics or home healthcare services.

What can I do with these degrees?

If you have completed ...

Associate in Applied Science Degree

Physical Therapist Assistant

How can I prepare now?

Recommended courses ...

Math

Algebra

Science

Anatomy and Physiology, Biology, Chemistry, Physics

Communications

Composition, Speech

Recommended Supporting Electives

Psychology, Sociology

Recommended Experience within this Field

Volunteer, observe and/or work with a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant in at least one of the following settings: hospital, outpatient clinic, skilled care facility, pediatric facility, rehabilitation center, fitness center, home healthcare agency or school system.

What about my articulated credit?

Check with your high school coordinator to see if you are eligible for articulated credit at College of DuPage.

What should I take in my first semester at C.O.D.?

A&P 1151: Human Anatomy and Physiology I *OR*
A&P 1571: Anatomy and Physiology with Cadaver I
HSCI 1110: Biomedical Terminology
ENG 1101: Composition I
MATH 1100 or higher

The College of DuPage Physical Therapist Assistant program is accredited by the American Physical Therapy Association.

The College of DuPage PTA program has a separate admission process. Students must be admitted to the program to take PHYTA courses.

For more information, students may contact the American Physical Therapy Association at its website: www.apta.org.

Whom can I talk to for more information?

Health, Social and Behavioral Sciences Division
(630) 942-2495

For more information on the Associate in Applied Science Degree curriculum, see your program coordinator, or go to www.cod.edu.