

PT Moves Me Ambassador Program - Talking Points for High School, Early College

What is Physical Therapy:

- Physical therapy is treatment provided by a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant that helps people improve their movement and physical function, manage pain and other chronic conditions, and recover from and prevent injury and chronic disease.

Who are Physical Therapist:

- Physical therapists are licensed doctors who examine, diagnose, and treat movement dysfunction. They treat people impacted by disease, injury, and disability as well as prevent movement loss and promote wellness.
- Physical therapists are anatomy and physiology experts and have an in-depth knowledge of the body's muscles, bones, nerves, ligaments, tendons, blood vessels, fascia, etc. and how they all work together to keep people moving.

Who are Physical Therapist Assistants:

- Physical therapist assistants are educated and licensed or certified clinicians that provide physical therapy services under the direction and supervision of a licensed physical therapist.
- There is a difference between physical therapist assistants and physical therapy aides. PTAs are licensed or certified clinicians trained to provide health care services, while PT aides perform nonmedical tasks and assist with clinical duties, working under the supervision of a PT or PTA.

8 Things You Didn't Know About Physical Therapy:

- Only licensed PTs and PTAs can provide physical therapy services.
- PTs and PTAs care for people of all ages and abilities. They treat patients across the lifespan.
- PTs and PTAs work throughout the health care system.
- PTs and PTAs can focus on specific areas of care, known as specialties and proficiencies.
- PTs and PTAs treat multiple body systems, not just the musculoskeletal system.
- You do not have to be a science major to pursue a career in physical therapy.
- There are two physical therapy career pathways (DPT and PTA).
- There are many professional options as a physical therapist, including: clinical practitioner, researcher, professor, advocate, entrepreneur, CEO, influencer.

Pathway to Physical Therapy

- Pathway to DPT: High School Diploma/GED - bachelor's degree - 3-year DPT degree - DPT licensure exam
- Pathway to PTA: High School Diploma/GED - two-year associate's degree - PTA licensure exam

Why Choose PT:

- Top-ranked health care profession
- Growing Profession
- Median PT Salary = \$89,499 and median PTA Salary = \$58,520
- Build relationships with patients
- Rewarding: See the direct impact and benefit of your work

Prepare Now

- Do your research (apta.org, ptcas.org)
- Observe a PT or PTA and try to diversify your experience
- Find a mentor
- Solid foundation in anatomy, physiology, and basic sciences

APTA Helpful Resources

- American Physical Therapy Association: apta.org
- Physical Therapist Centralized Application Service: ptcas.org
- Physical Therapist Assistant Centralized Application Service: ptacas.liaisoncas.com
- Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education: capteonline.org
- APTA Financial Solutions Center: enrich.apta.org
- Questions about PT Careers or Pathways to PT/PTA: studentrecruitment@apta.org