

Press release

For immediate release

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Physical therapists' role in chronic pain is the theme for World Physical Therapy Day

Chronic pain is a significant global health burden – with low back pain causing more disability than any other condition. The role of physical therapists in helping people with chronic pain to take control of their condition, increase their activity, and improve their quality of life is the theme of this year's [World Physical Therapy Day](#) on 8 September 2019.

Chronic pain can be associated with a wide range of conditions including low back pain, cervical and thoracic pain, shoulder pain, headache disorders, cancer, fibromyalgia, rheumatoid arthritis, and osteoarthritis.

Physical therapists have unique skills to recommend specific exercise programmes to help relieve chronic pain.

The benefits of using exercise to manage chronic pain include:

- maintaining flexibility and movement
- improving cardiovascular health
- building and keeping muscle tone
- improving mood and general wellbeing
- helping control pain
- increasing confidence to take part in activities
- taking back control of your life and reducing your fear.

WCPT President Emma Stokes said: 'People who have chronic pain tell us that it can be difficult to get or stay active. But a physical therapist can work with you to suggest activities or a programme that's right for you. They can help you understand how pain works, reduce your fears around pain, educate you about your condition, encourage you to take part safely in physical activity, build your confidence, help you remain or return to work or participate in activities that allow you to live life the way you want to.'

'Talk to a physical therapist and discover how they can help you learn self-management techniques to manage your pain.'

- [World Physical Therapy Day toolkit](#)

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EDITOR'S NOTES

About physical therapy

Physical therapists (also known as physiotherapists) are experts in developing and maintaining people's ability to move and function throughout their lives. With an advanced understanding of how the body moves and what keeps it from moving well, they promote wellness, mobility and independence. They treat and prevent many problems caused by pain, illness, disability and disease, sport and work related injuries, ageing and inactivity.

Physical therapists are educated over several years, giving them a full knowledge of the body's systems and the skills to treat a wide range of problems. This education is usually university-based, at a level that allows physical therapists to practise independently. Continuing education ensures that they keep up to date with the latest advances in research and practice. Many physical therapists are engaged in research themselves.

About World Physical Therapy Day

World Physical Therapy Day falls on 8 September every year, and is an opportunity for physical therapists from all over the world to raise awareness about their role in keeping people well, mobile and independent. The day was established by WCPT in 1996, and marks the date on which WCPT was founded in 1951.

About WCPT

WCPT is the profession's global body representing over 450,000 physical therapists/physiotherapists from member organisations in 121 countries. More information: www.wcpt.org.



**World Confederation
for Physical Therapy**