Do I need a referral for Physical Therapy? If so, how do I get one?

Although laws in most states allow you to receive physical therapy services without a referral from a medical provider, some insurances require a referral for an evaluation and/or treatment. It is recommended you call your insurance company to verify their requirements as well as what your state laws allow before participating in therapy.

If a referral is needed, speak with your medical provider who is familiar with your symptoms. In addition to physical therapy, medical diagnostic tests (bloodwork, imaging, etc.) and other treatment options may be recommended. A referral to physical therapy must be signed and shared either on paper or electronically by your medical provider (i.e. physician, physician’s assistant, nurse practitioner), who specializes in family or internal medicine, urology, OB/GYN or urogynecology.

If you are unsure if physical therapy (PT) is right for you, participating in an evaluation can provide you some answers. PT is a non-invasive, conservative approach to many ailments and is typically recommended as an early option. Examinations provided by a physical therapist involve discussing your concerns and assessing strength, motion, posture, breathing and movement patterns. Based on the examination findings, a physical therapist will develop an individualized treatment plan for you based on your goals. Treatments may include exercise, hands-on techniques, non-medication pain management options and education regarding lifestyle and long-term healing. In cases where physical therapy does not fully resolve your symptoms, returning to your medical provider to discuss further options for your care may be necessary.

Find a Physical Therapist near you using PT Locator at pctl.womenshealthapta.org
For more educational resources, please visit www.womenshealthapta.org/patients