Occupational Therapy in an Outpatient Setting

Imagine these scenarios:

• You had a stroke and your memory has been affected, making it hard to remember to take your medication or remember what you need to get done every day.

• You have arthritis and can’t do some of the simple tasks you used to do because of pain.

• You’ve been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, and getting washed and dressed in the morning is completely exhausting.

• You developed carpal tunnel syndrome from your job and need a custom wrist splint fabricated and recommendations to prevent it from getting worse.

All of these scenarios would benefit from seeing an occupational therapist in an outpatient setting. As described by the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), occupational therapists help people across the lifespan participate in the things they want and need to do through the therapeutic use of everyday activities.

Unlike other professions, occupational therapy helps people function in all of their environments and addresses the physical and cognitive aspects of their well-being through engagement in occupation. This can mean regaining skills that will improve your independence, learning new ways to do everyday tasks—despite an illness or injury—recommendations for adaptive equipment, or educating caregivers on how to assist their family members.

During an outpatient occupational therapy session, areas of focus include:

• Regaining the physical skills needed to use an arm/hand that was affected by a stroke or brain injury.

• Teaching adaptive ways to get washed, dressed and perform homemaking activities.

• Teaching energy conservation techniques so that an individual can continue to
perform what they need to do.

- Developing strategies to compensate for cognitive impairments, in order to allow individuals to increase their independence in everyday tasks.
- Teaching joint protection and the use of adaptive devices that will allow individuals with painful joints to continue to engage in their occupations.

As an occupational therapist at Penn Therapy & Fitness Rittenhouse, I treat all varieties of neurologic diagnosis as well as some orthopaedic hand conditions such as arthritis and hand/wrist fractures. One of my favorite things about my work is educating patients on their ability to continue to engage in the activities that make up their lives, sometimes in a different way than they had prior to their diagnosis.

Interested in learning more about how occupational therapy can improve your quality of life? Read more about the programs offered at Penn Therapy & Fitness.

About the Blogger:

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