Outpatient Physical Therapy After Limb Loss

In the United States, nearly two million people are living with limb loss, with over 185,000 amputations occurring each year. As a physical therapist that works with the limb loss population, I have observed and appreciated how beneficial teamwork can be during the days, months, and years following an amputation. Physical rehabilitation after limb loss can be challenging both mentally and physically. To optimize your results, it is crucial to choose a program that offers specialized amputation physical rehabilitation that is designed to assist with these challenges along the way- working together to help meet your specific goals.

Whether your limb loss is recent and you’re transitioning from our amputee specialty inpatient program at Penn Rehab, or you just need additional support, outpatient physical therapy can be an important part in maximizing your both your independence and quality of life. Outpatient physical therapy can give you the boost needed to reach your full potential by:

- *Continuing the progress made in inpatient rehabilitation, or with home care therapists*
- *Increasing strength, range of motion, endurance and balancing*
- *Manage and prevent common physical conditions such as contractures, low back pain, phantom limb pain and joint pain*
- *Improve your ability, comfort and results by coordinating care with your therapists, doctors and prosthetist*
- *Assisting in identifying community resources*

Outpatient physical therapy is an opportunity to address your current needs, and what needs to be in place in order to reach that goal. Together with your physical therapist, an individualized treatment plan will be created that consists of patient-care resources, exercises and education specific to your necessities. Common areas of focus include:

- *Building strength in areas to help achieve desired goals*
- *Stretching techniques that can improve motion and walking ability*
• Self-care techniques to help alleviate pain associated with limb and phantom pain.
• Endurance training to strengthen the cardiovascular system
• Balance training to help prevent falls and to improve confidence
• Prosthetics evaluation, fit and training
• Individualized exercise and drills prescribed by your therapist to reach your full potential

Whether your goal is to begin improving your mobility following limb loss, or to return to sport activity, outpatient physical therapy can jump start your program! **Click here to learn more about the outpatient amputation services available at Penn Therapy & Fitness.**

**About the Blogger:**

Christopher Runkle, PT, DPT, CSCS received his Doctorate of Physical Therapy from the University of Delaware in 2010, and specializes in limb loss rehabilitation. He has developed his special interest and clinical skill set while working in a variety of rehabilitation and academic settings. Chris has presented on interdisciplinary collaboration and lower extremity limb loss topics at professional conferences and academic lectures. He works with the limb loss (pre and post amputation therapy), prosthetic gait training, and general lower extremity orthopedic populations.