

PHYSICAL THERAPY

ARTHRITIS ACTION FACTSHEETS



What is it?

Physical therapy is defined as hands on treatment of disease or injury by physical methods, including massage, manipulation, articulation, exercise prescription, acupuncture, and sometimes the use of electrical equipment.

The benefits of physical therapy

Gentle massage, stretching, articulation, body alignment and balancing techniques are all beneficial and effective for those with arthritis, making you more flexible and mobile with improved posture and a lessening of painful symptoms.

We offer our Members access to subsidised physical therapy treatments via our network of Associated Practitioners (APs). You can check if there is an Associated Practitioner near you on [our website](#). You can also find out more about our clinic in [London](#).

Types of Therapy

Osteopathy is a person-centred manual therapy that aims to enhance and maintain health and wellbeing. Osteopaths believe that wellbeing depends on the musculoskeletal system working smoothly. Osteopaths use hands-on techniques and education to:

- Increase the mobility of joints
- Reduce muscle tension
- Improve the blood supply
- Help the body to heal itself

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Physiotherapy helps to restore movement and function in people affected by illness, injury or disability. Physiotherapists assess, treat and prevent a wide range of health conditions and movement disorders using the following approaches:

- Hands-on manual therapy
- Exercise and stretching
- Advice and education
- Hydrotherapy
- Electrotherapy and ultrasound

Osteopathy and **Physiotherapy** can help with:

- General arthritis and rheumatic pain
- Pain in the shoulders, elbows, pelvis, hips and legs
- Lower back pain
- Neck pain and associated headaches
- Sciatica and neuralgia
- Inability to relax
- Problems with posture caused by driving or work
- Injury rehabilitation and prevention
- Sports-related injuries

Chiropractors

- Diagnose and treat patients
- Use manual techniques to make small adjustments to joints
- All our Chiropractors use gentle techniques and are experienced in the management of arthritis

Acupuncture

- Acupuncture is safe and uses fine, sterile (single use) needles inserted into points which acupuncturists call meridians
- The aim of acupuncture treatment is to restore the body to a natural state of balance
- There is some scientific evidence to suggest that it can help with back and neck pain or persistent headaches
- Osteopaths, Physiotherapists and Chiropractors are often qualified in Western Medical Acupuncture

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Massage Therapy

- Many different types available
- Treatment pressure can vary from gentle to very strong
- Some types may work in a similar fashion to acupuncture
- It may help with lower back and neck pain, stress, sleep, relaxation and hence may help with the management of persistent pain

All of our Associated Practitioners are experienced in the treatment of arthritis in keeping with best practice. They may offer you self-management advice, exercises and lifestyle changes.