Occupational Therapy

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Definition

Occupational therapy (OT) consists of the therapeutic use of activities to promote health, wellness, and rehabilitation for persons who have, or are at risk of, developing diseases, disorders, impairments, disabilities, or other conditions that limit participation in and performance of everyday life activities. Occupational therapy attempts to address sensory, physical, cognitive, and psychosocial aspects of everyday life activities. In physical rehabilitation therapeutic settings, occupational therapists often focus on upper extremity function, activities of daily living, and reintegration into home, work, and community environments. Occupational therapists and neuropsychologists assess and treat common domains (e.g., cognition and psychosocial functioning), although neuropsychological testing places greater emphasis on test standardization, quantification of results, and normative interpretation. In contrast, occupational therapists make

extensive use of observational ratings of holistic, adaptive functioning across clinical and community settings. Both professions utilize similar cognitive rehabilitation techniques to address patient needs. The overlap in domains assessed and treated, as well as divergence in techniques, creates potential for fruitful collaboration between these two professional fields. OT emerged as a distinct profession in the 1920s and has grown to include more than 100,000 licensed professionals today. To practice in the USA, OTs must earn a master's degree and pass the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy's licensing exam.

Cross-References

- [Cognitive Rehabilitation](#)
- [Physical Therapy](#)
- [Recreational Therapy](#)
- [Speech-Language Therapy](#)

References and Reading

- Roy, S. H., Wolf, S. L., & Scalzitti, D. A. (2013). *The rehabilitation specialist's handbook* (4th ed.). Philadelphia: FA Davis.