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Physiotherapy and stroke



What is the role of physiotherapy in rehabilitation of stroke patients?

- The role of **physiotherapy** is very important for rehabilitation of stroke patients, as it forms an essential part in health care provided to the patient.



- **Physical therapy** concerns with restoring and maintaining the functional movement of the body, as well as it helps to improve muscle strength, range of motion of joints, balance, and movement coordination.
- The **main goal** is to help the patient regain independence and improve the quality of life.



When should physiotherapy start after a stroke?

- Physiotherapy begins as soon as the **patient's condition is stabilized** according to the medical opinion. The earlier treatment has started, chance of restoring lost abilities and skills will increase.

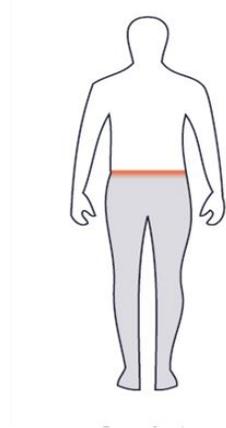


- Physiotherapy sessions often begin **24 to 48 hours** after a stroke.



How long does the physiotherapy take after a stroke?

- Physiotherapy period may be long or short, depending on the severity of the disease and its complications, and the patient's response to treatment.
- In some cases, the patient recovers from a stroke quickly, and thus the duration of physical therapy can last for a short time, but in cases where the state of **paraplegia** is moderate or severe, the period can last for a longer period, up to months or years after the stroke.



What is included in the post-stroke physical therapy program?

- At the outset, the specialist evaluates the patient's condition through a **careful clinical examination**, and then develops an appropriate treatment plan fits the patient's needs.



What is included in the post-stroke physical therapy program?

The program often includes some or all the following activities, depending on the patient's condition and the treatment phase:

1. Therapeutic exercises:

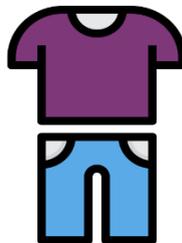
- Exercises that maintain joint mobility and muscle flexibility.
- Exercises that help improve muscle strength and coordination.
- Exercises that improve balance in sitting, standing, and walking.



What is included in the post-stroke physical therapy program?

2. Motor training:

- Training for proper postures and how to move from one place to another.
- Early sit and stand training.
- Focus on treating the upper limb to improve the patient's functional condition.
- Teaching the patient to be independent in daily motor functions such as eating, dressing, or walking in a correct manner.



What is included in the post-stroke physical therapy program?

2. Motor training:

Training regarding use of assistive devices such as some prosthetic devices such as crutches, wheelchairs, or splints, and these are described according to the situation and after certain measurements.



3. Other Treatments:

- Massage and manual therapy to relieve muscle pain.
- Electrical stimulation helps stimulate muscles and reduce tension.
- Water therapy or the use of hot or cold compresses to relieve pain.



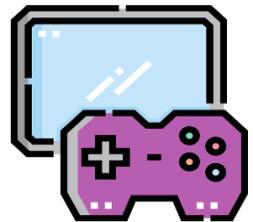
What is included in the post-stroke physical therapy program?

4. Other Treatments:

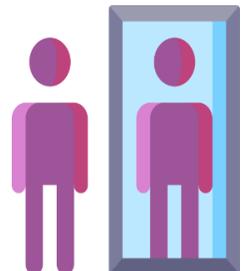
- Treatment of compulsory use by tying the healthy limb during training, as the patient is forced to use the affected limb.



- Virtual therapy, which is a modern treatment method that depends on computer and video games and includes interaction with a similar environment to the real environment.



- Mirror therapy, which is also a new treatment method that relies on the use of a mirror to enhance movement in the affected limb.





Guidelines for stroke patients:

- The patient should be encouraged to use and move the affected side.
- Avoid pulling the injured shoulder or carrying the patient through the shoulders.
- Take safety measures for injured limbs and during movement.
- Increase awareness of the affected side by talking to the patient from the affected side.





Guidelines for stroke patients:

- You must follow the correct postures and avoid the wrong positions while sleeping or sitting.



- The patient should be encouraged to do the exercises himself as much as possible and avoid depending on others assistance in order not to lose the ability of self-support.



Review and audit:

The content of this booklet has been reviewed by
consultants of the Neurology department at King Fahad
University Hospital

Health Awareness Unit

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