



Physical Therapy Assistant

Course Overview: Focuses on careers in planning, managing, and providing therapeutic services, diagnostic services, health informatics, support services, and biotechnology research and development.

Career Goal (O*NET Code): (31-2021) - Most physical therapist assistants work in offices of physical therapists, hospitals, and in a variety of settings that facilitate physical therapy. They work under the direction of physical therapists. They help patients who are recovering from injuries, illnesses, and surgery regain movement and manage pain. Physical therapist assistants are involved in the direct care of patients.

Student Name: _____

Grade: _____

School: _____

SUGGESTED COURSEWORK

EXTENDED LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Middle School	8th	HS Courses:	(Local districts may list high school credit courses here)			<p>Curricular Experiences: *** Health Occupations Students of America</p> <p>Career Learning Experiences: Career Preparation Internship Job Shadowing Clinical Rotations Certifications Clinical Volunteer Work (local hospitals & medical facilities)</p> <p>Extracurricular Experiences:*** Language Immersion Programs National Youth Leadership Forum on Medicine School Newspaper Student Council UIL Academic Competitions Yearbook</p> <p>Service Learning Experiences: Boy/Girl Scouts Campus Service Organizations Community Service Volunteer Medical Mission Trips Peer Mentoring / Peer Tutoring Special Olympics</p>
	High School	9th	Courses*:	English I Algebra I or Geometry Biology	World Geography Foreign Language I Physical Education or Athletics	
Career-Related Electives:			Principles of Health Science			
10th		Courses:	English II Geometry or Algebra II Chemistry	World History Foreign Language II Elective	Elective	
		Career-Related Electives:	Medical Terminology and Pathophysiology			
11th		Core Courses:	English III Algebra II or Pre-Calculus Physics	United States History Foreign Language III ** Professional Communications or Speech	Elective	
		Career-Related Electives:	Health Science			
12th	Core Courses:	English IV Pre-Calculus or Calculus 4th Science	Government/Economics Elective Elective			
	Career-Related Electives:	Practicum in Health Science				
COLLEGE CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES -- High School						
Students should take Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), dual credit, Advanced Technical Credit (ATC), or locally articulated courses (Tech Prep), if possible. List those courses that count for college credit on your campus.						

Postsecondary	<p>How to Become a Physical Therapist Assistant Physical therapist assistants provide therapy through exercise; therapeutic methods like electrical stimulation, mechanical traction, and ultrasound; massage; and gait and balance training. Most states require physical therapist assistants to have an associate's degree from an accredited physical therapist program.</p>			<p>Carrer Options (Sample of reported job titles)</p>		<p>Professional Associations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> American Physical Therapy Association Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy
	<p>Texas Southmost College South Texas College Texas State Technical College</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) Physical Therapy Assistant (PTA) Physical Therapy Technician Licensed Physical Therapist Assistant (LPTA) Licensed Physical Therapy Assistant (LPTA) 		
	Physical Therapy Assistants (AAS)					
	<p>The University of Texas at Brownsville The University of Texas - Pan American</p>					

* Students must meet local & state high school graduation requirements. ** Required course for the Distinguished Graduation Plan (in addition to other measures). *** Based on campus availability. Students may select other elective courses for personal enrichment purposes.

This plan of study serves as a guide, along with other career planning materials, for pursuing a career path and is based on the most recent information as of 2009. All plans meet high school graduation requirements as well as college entrance requirements.



Physical Therapist Assistant

TEA Industry Cluster	Health Sciences
SOC Code	31-2021
Identified by	TIP Strategies; Tech Prep Occupations
Projected Growth (2018)	26%
BISD Magnet School Available	No

Source: Demand Occupations by Cluster, updated June 27, 2012

Description

What Physical Therapist Assistants and Aides Do

Most physical therapist assistants work in offices of physical therapists, hospitals, and in a variety of settings that facilitate physical therapy. They work under the direction of physical therapists. They help patients who are recovering from injuries, illnesses, and surgery regain movement and manage pain. Physical therapist assistants are involved in the direct care of patients.

Duties

Physical therapist assistants typically do the following:

- Observe patients before and during therapy, noting their status and reporting to a physical therapist
- Help patients do specific exercises
- Use a variety of techniques, such as massage and stretching, to treat patients
- Use devices and equipment, such as walkers, to help patients
- Educate a patient and family members about what to do after treatment

Physical therapist assistants help physical therapists provide care to patients. Under the direction and supervision of physical therapists, they give therapy through exercise; therapeutic methods, such as electrical stimulation, mechanical traction, and ultrasound; massage; and gait and balance training. Physical therapist assistants record patients' responses to treatment and report the results of each treatment to the physical therapist.

Training Opportunities Linked to Those Jobs (Degree Types and Colleges/Universities)

How to Become a Physical Therapist Assistant or Aide

Physical therapist assistants provide therapy through exercise; therapeutic methods like electrical stimulation, mechanical traction, and ultrasound; massage; and gait and balance training.

Most states require physical therapist assistants to have an associate's degree from an accredited physical therapist program. Physical therapist aides usually have a high school diploma and get on-the-job training.

Education

Most states require physical therapist assistants to have an associate's degree from an accredited physical therapist program. In 2011, there were 280 associate's degree programs for physical therapist assistants accredited by the [Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education](#).

Programs are divided into academic coursework and clinical experience. Academic courses include algebra, English, anatomy and physiology, and psychology. Clinical work includes certifications in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and other first aid and hands-on experience in treatment centers. Many physical therapist assistants and aides continue their formal education to qualify for jobs in administration, management, and education.

Physical therapist aides typically have a high school diploma or equivalent. They commonly get clinical experience through on-the-job training. This training can last from a few weeks to several months.

Important Qualities

Compassion. Physical therapy is an important part of the recovery process for people who have been through surgeries, illnesses, and injuries. Physical therapist assistants and aides should enjoy helping people.

Detail oriented. Like other healthcare professionals, physical therapist assistants and aides should be organized and have a keen eye for detail. They must keep accurate records and follow written instructions carefully to ensure quality care.

Dexterity. Physical therapist assistants should be comfortable using their hands to provide manual therapy and therapeutic exercises. Aides should also be comfortable working with their hands to set up equipment and prepare treatment areas.

Interpersonal skills. Both physical therapist assistants and aides spend much of their time interacting with clients. They should be courteous and friendly.

Physical stamina. Physical therapist assistants and aides are frequently on their feet and moving as they work with their patients. They must often kneel, stoop, bend, and stand for long periods. They should enjoy physical activity.

Licenses

Most states require physical therapist assistants to be licensed. Licensure typically requires graduation from an accredited physical therapist assistant program and passing the Physical National Physical Therapy Exam. Some states require additional state-administered exams. In some states, physical therapist assistants also need to take continuing education courses. Check with your [state licensing board](#).

Physical therapist aides are not required to be licensed.

Texas Southmost College	South Texas College	Texas State Technical College	The University of Texas at Brownsville	The University of Texas - Pan American
	Physical Therapist Assistant (AAS)			

Local Employer

Employer	City	Employer	City
A Better Choice Home Health	Brownsville	Apc Home Health Svc Inc	Harlingen
A One Health Svc Agency	Brownsville	Apc Home Maker Svc	Harlingen
A Touch Home Health Care Inc	Brownsville	Apc Homemakers	Harlingen
Abc Pediatrics	Brownsville	Apc Homemakers Headquarters	Harlingen
Abundant Life Home Health Inc	Brownsville	Apria Healthcare	Harlingen

Career Options (Specific Job Types)

Sample of reported job titles:

- Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA)
- Physical Therapy Assistant (PTA)
- Physical Therapy Technician
- Licensed Physical Therapist Assistant (LPTA)
- Licensed Physical Therapy Assistant (LPTA)

Salary Ranges

Wages for Physical Therapist Assistants

Location	Pay Period	2011				
		10%	25%	Median	75%	90%
United States	Hourly	\$15.40	\$19.87	\$24.54	\$28.96	\$34.23
	Yearly	\$32,000	\$41,300	\$51,000	\$60,200	\$71,200
Texas	Hourly	\$20.46	\$25.29	\$30.53	\$37.05	\$45.15
	Yearly	\$42,600	\$52,600	\$63,500	\$77,100	\$93,900
Brownsville-Harlingen, TX MSA	Hourly	\$10.53	\$22.04	\$33.91	\$42.32	\$48.45
	Yearly	\$21,900	\$45,800	\$70,500	\$88,000	\$100,800
McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, TX MSA	Hourly	\$21.42	\$30.44	\$34.95	\$50.70	\$59.67
	Yearly	\$44,600	\$63,300	\$72,700	\$105,500	\$124,100

Professional Associations Linked to the Careers

For more information about physical therapist assistants, including a list of schools offering accredited programs, visit

[American Physical Therapy Association](#)

[Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy](#)

Sources

The information provided in this document was collected from the following sources:

- Occupational Outlook Handbook (<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/>)
- O*NET OnLine (<http://www.onetonline.org/>)
- Texas CARES (<http://www.texascaresonline.com/>)
- CareerOneStop (<http://www.careeronestop.org/>)