

Getting Started

FAQ

Company & Therapists

What distinguishes Willow Grove Physical Therapy from other physical therapy clinics?

Willow Grove Physical Therapy boasts 9 certified vestibular therapists with extensive experience in treating dizziness and balance disorders. Majority of our staff are Doctors of Physical therapy, with two Orthopedic Clinical Specialists, and 3 McKenzie Certified therapists. All of our patients are treated by a licensed physical therapist and not physical therapy assistants. Our patients receive personal attention in a professional setting. All patients are given customized exercise programs for home and in the clinic which are closely monitored. Patients are frequently reassessed to assess progress towards our goals. Our therapists take continuing education courses annually to be certain we are providing state of the art treatment.

What training does a physical therapist have?

Physical Therapists are licensed professionals regulated by the state board of physical therapy. To become a licensed physical therapist, candidates complete an accredited program to achieve a clinical doctorate in physical therapy (DPT). This is an intense program that includes both academic and clinical training. Post graduation, physical therapists continue their education in areas of special interest by attending courses and seminars. While most schooling now requires a doctorate, experienced clinicians may continue to practice with a master's degree.

Why should I see a certified vestibular therapist?

Certified vestibular therapists have specialized and extensive post graduate training on the inner ear, also known as the balance organ. You should see a certified vestibular therapist if you are having symptoms of vertigo, and/or imbalance leading to a risk of falls. A thorough evaluation will be performed on the balance system which includes vestibulo-ocular coordination, position testing, balance testing, and fall risk assessment. The therapist will then develop an individualized treatment based on the findings of the evaluation. The goal is to increase balance, improve postural stability, and decrease symptoms of dizziness and/or vertigo.

What is an Orthopedic Clinical Specialist (OCS)?

Orthopedic clinical specialists diagnose, manage, and treat disorders and injuries of the musculoskeletal system. This specialty of physical therapy is most often found in the out-patient clinical setting. Orthopedic therapists are trained in the treatment of post-operative orthopedic procedures, fractures, acute sports injuries, arthritis, sprains, strains, back and neck pain, spinal conditions and amputations. This designation is awarded by the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) for extensive work in orthopedics and successful exam completion. This certification is good for ten years and then re certification is required.

Conditions

What is the balance system?

The balance system is comprised of visual (eyes), vestibular (inner ear), and somatosensory (body sense) input to the brain. We use our eyes to see where we are in the environment, our body sense allows us to feel

our position or movement, and our inner ear is responsible for sensing the orientation of our head with respect to gravity. The brain takes the sensory input and then coordinates motor (body movement) response. Our balance system gives us equilibrium and stability, and enables us to change positions and move without falling. Falls and fear of falling are of grave concern since fractures and injuries can be a result of a fall. If the balance system is compromised Vestibular Therapy is very beneficial in restoring balance, reducing fall risk and improving balance confidence.

What is dizziness?

Dizziness is a sensation of lightheadedness, giddiness, or imbalance. Dizziness is a general term used to describe symptoms that can be caused by many different of conditions.

What is vertigo?

Vertigo is a sensation of motion in which the individual or individual's surroundings seem to move, spin, or whirl.

How do you treat positional vertigo?

The Epley maneuver or canalith repositioning maneuver has roughly an 80% cure rate, and is very effective for treating positional vertigo. The treatment involves positioning the head and body in a specific series of positions, with the head lower than the body, holding each position for 30 seconds. This moves the "crystals" (otoconia) back to the part of the inner ear (utricle) from which they were displaced. (see our video; menu selection "Postional Vertigo")

Will I get nauseous after being treated for vertigo and can I drive home by myself?

Some patients do experience nausea after being treated for vertigo. Most patients are able to drive home after treatment, but if you have any reservations about driving then we ask that someone takes you to and from your first appointment.

How many visits will I need if I have vertigo?

In many cases, positional vertigo can be treated and resolved in one to two sessions. However, in other cases it may take longer especially if balance is affected or if the patient is experiencing a moderate or severe handicap because of dizziness. Generally, patients are seen twice a week for an average of four weeks and then reassessed to see if additional visits are needed. This will be discussed on your first visit with your Physical Therapist. The number of sessions will vary on a case by case basis.

What is the Dix-Hallpike test for vertigo?

The Dix- Hallpike test is one component of a clinical exam which can best diagnose positional vertigo. In this test, the individual is sitting upright on an exam table with their legs extended and their head turned 45 degrees to one side. The individual is moved from an upright position to lying down with their head extended lower than the body. The therapist observes the eyes for nystagmus (jumping of the eyes) and a reproduction of symptoms such as spinning and nausea. This would indicate a positive test for positional vertigo.

What is peripheral neuropathy?

Peripheral neuropathy is a condition that can cause pain, numbness and tingling in the hands and/or feet. Some patients will also experience a loss of sensation, which in turn may alter one's balance and therefore increase their risk of falls. One of the most common causes of peripheral neuropathy is diabetes, but others include physical injury (trauma) to a nerve, tumors, toxins, autoimmune responses, nutritional deficiencies, alcoholism, spinal stenosis, chemotherapy, and vascular and metabolic disorders.

Patient Insurance

Will I have to pay anything?

If your plan stipulates a copay or coinsurance, we expect payment on the day of your visit(s). We will inform you of the amount we are quoted and strongly encourage you to verify with your respective insurance company as well.

Can I still come and see you if my insurance is not accepted?

Absolutely. Call the office to discuss our self-pay policy.

How much time will it take?

We tell patients to arrive 15 minutes prior to their first appointment time to complete paperwork, etc. You may also download forms from this website to complete and bring with you... the most time-consuming being the Past Medical History form. Our office is extremely time-sensitive. You will be seen at your appointment time and will be here approximately 1 hour.

Do you take my insurance?

We call on most plans to verify insurance coverage and copay/deductible information. Some plans have in network and/or capitation mandates. This means you must go to a provider in their specific network or the provider your PCP selects for you.

A list of the most popular insurance plans are listed under the "Getting Started" tab. We do call and verify respective deductibles and/or copay information and will relay that to the patient upon making contact with the insurance company. If your plan is not listed, please call our office and we can verify if your insurance will be accepted. Self-pay plans are also available.

Do I need a script?

In many cases, you are able to come "Direct Access". Our therapists with their direct access license can evaluate and treat you for 30 days prior to needing a script. Please call to find out how to get started with PT first!