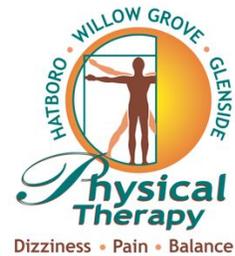
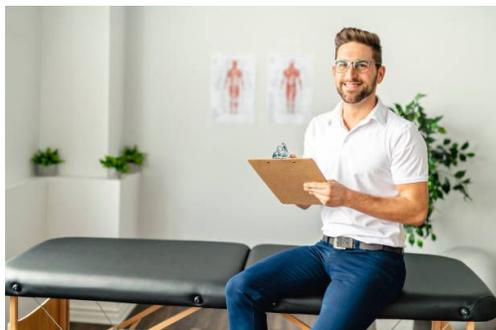


The History Behind the Opioid Epidemic and the APTA's Mission to Stop It:



America is currently living through the deadliest drug epidemic in history. Data based on a government survey in 2018 found that 2.6 million people in the United States suffer from an opioid use disorder. The roots of today's opioid epidemic stem back to 1980 when a doctor by the name of Hershel Jick and his assistant, Jane Porter, published a letter to The New England Journal of Medicine, stating that the risk of becoming addicted to opioids was less than 1%. Jick and Porter reviewed medical records of nearly 12,000 hospital patients treated with painkillers and discovered that only 4 of them had become dependent on the drug. Decades following the release of that letter, doctors, academics, and pharmaceutical companies fiercely advocated for these same painkillers, citing Jick and Porter's letter incorrectly and uncritically. These companies claimed that few users would develop addictions, however, what these doctors, academics, and major companies failed to mention was that those 12,000 patients who were analyzed throughout the study were overseen by medical professionals in hospitals and not simply prescribed take-home painkillers for diagnoses such as arthritis and minor injuries. They received medical oversight and care while they were using opioids that a majority of Americans do not have the privilege of accessing when they are simply given a pill bottle to manage pain on their own. The information supplied by Jick and Porter was misinterpreted and manipulated to fuel the current epidemic.

In 2016, The American Physical Therapy Association released a public relations effort, #ChoosePT, to inform consumers about the opioid epidemic and urge them to consider physical therapy as their primary alternative for pain management. It is no secret that people want an immediate solution to their pain and discomfort. While this can oftentimes include a quick massage or an adjustment from a chiropractor, far too often people resort to the use of addictive pain medication for their "quick-fix". #ChoosePT is a campaign advocating for movement and exercise to help create a long-term tool for pain and self-management strategies. #ChoosePT reminds patients of their options, one of which includes physical activity, hands-on care, and education to reduce and control pain without putting their lives at risk.



Instead of opening up a bottle with a warning label on the side which includes hundreds of side-effects, imagine having a physical therapist that knows your name, your goals, listens to your story and creates a specific plan just for you. #ChoosePT can play an essential role in ending the opioid epidemic. Physical therapists are the main resource for patients and clients dealing with chronic pain and movement disorders and can help those

who are suffering understand that masking the pain with opioids is not the only option in addition to the existence of safer, more effective alternatives like physical therapy!



- 1980** A doctor by the name of Hershel Jick claims that opioid pain killers are not addicting
- 1990s** Pharmaceutical companies take advantage of Dr. Hershel's claims and begin advocating opioid use to the medical community
- 2016** Over 40,000 deaths related to opioid use

Opioid Risks Include:

- Depression
- Addiction
- Withdrawal symptoms
- Death



Risks of trying PT?

NONE.

What can Physical Therapy do for me?



Physical therapy gives you the option to attain pain relief that does not come in a bottle with a warning label on the side.



Opioids only mask the sensation of pain and are a temporary answer to a serious problem, they do not get rid of it.



Physical therapy will use movement, hands-on care, and education to give you a **LONG-TERM** solution to manage your pain

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Michelle Grinberg, SPT



Michelle is one of our doctoral interns from Temple University slated to graduate with her Doctor of Physical Therapy degree in May, 2021. She has been practicing physical therapy with some of our therapists at the Willow Grove and Hatboro offices and will remain with us for a total of ~6 months. We're so happy to help her along her journey towards becoming a PT, appreciate all of the work that she has done for our patients, and know she will make an excellent clinician sometime soon!