



WHEN SHOULD YOU SEEK THERAPY OVER OPIOIDS?

It seems like almost every news broadcast these days features a story about a disturbing cluster of drug overdoses, with the word "opioid" prominently featured. So, why are these prescription drugs – which, after all, are legal if they were prescribed to the user - in the news so much these days? And what can you do if you're torn between not filling your own prescription, versus seeking relief for your very real pain? Both opioid prescription rates and deaths from opioid overdoses have quadrupled in the last two decades. Given these identical statistics, one can't escape the obvious conclusion: Reliance on painkillers has gotten out of hand, and the consequences can be literally fatal. In a study published by the American Physical Therapy Association, titled "Beyond Opioids: How Physical Therapy Can Transform Pain Management and Improve Health," this issue is exhaustively analyzed. It identifies three important waves of the opioid epidemic:

- 1. Increases in deaths involving prescription opioids starting in 1999**
- 2. Increases in deaths involving heroin starting in 2010**
- 3. Increases in deaths involving synthetic opioids since 2013"**

(continued inside)



GET TO THE SOURCE OF YOUR PAIN WITHOUT MEDICATION WHY OPIOID OVERUSE MATTERS

Beyond extreme physical risk, over-reliance on prescription painkillers can have other detrimental effects on your health. Withdrawal symptoms can be harrowing. And while you're still using them, opioids can lead to depression, which sets up a vicious cycle of self-medicating in order to feel better emotionally as well as physically. The Centers for Disease Control offers some frightening statistics from opioid overuse in 2011:

- "1. Sales of prescription painkillers to pharmacies and providers had increased 300% since 1999**
- "2. In 2010, 12 million people ages 12 and older reported using prescription painkillers "non-medically"**
- "3. More than 40 people were dying each day from overdoses involving prescription opioids"**

Fortunately, as the APTA study concludes, there is a safer alternative to opioid use: physical therapy. If you have been struggling with pain or discomfort, contact Orthopedic Physical Therapy, Inc. today to find out how we can resolve your issues the natural way.

HOW PHYSICAL THERAPY CAN COUNTER THE PROBLEM. According to the aforementioned study, "affirms that physical therapist interventions are an essential component of the multidisciplinary undertaking that will be required to improve patient outcomes and alter the trajectory of [the opioid] crisis." It's important to get real about the reason people seek prescription painkillers in the first place - the pain. These patients are not to be condemned for seeking relief for injuries, arthritis and other degenerative conditions, or for post-surgical discomfort. However, at the same time, it's becoming increasingly obvious that medications like Percocet, Vicodin, Opana, and OxyContin are extremely addictive.

Physical therapy, on the other hand, is extremely effective because it provides a multi-pronged attack to pain relief. Our physical therapists at Orthopedic Physical Therapy, Inc. are experts in manual techniques, exercise instruction, and trigger point dry needling. We identify the source of your pain and use our tools and expertise to help get you back to your life!

WHY PT OVER OPIOIDS? As you may now understand, physical therapy plays a large role in natural and effective pain relief. As easy as it may be to pop a pill in your mouth and wait for the pain to dissipate, the results are short-lived - pain medication simply masks the pain while physical therapy works to resolve the issue altogether. You may be wondering, "Will physical therapy help my specific pain or condition?" The short answer is - yes. All physical therapy treatment plans are built around the needs of the individual, in order to best achieve pain relief as



quickly as possible. When you arrive for your initial appointment, you will undergo a comprehensive exam that will determine the best methods of treatment for your needs. From there, your physical therapist will begin designing your treatment plan with two specific goals in mind: pain relief and improved function. While physical therapy has been known to treat a vast array of conditions, the APTA study outlines three common conditions that physical therapy has been proven to effectively treat:

- "1. Low back pain.** A review of more than 60 randomized controlled trials evaluating exercise therapy for adults with low back pain found that such treatment can decrease pain, improve function, and help people return to work.³⁹ The American College of Physicians states that "non-pharmacologic interventions are considered first-line options in patients with chronic low back pain because fewer harms are associated with these types of therapies than with pharmacologic options."
- 2. Before and after surgery.** A review of 35 randomized controlled studies with a total of nearly 3,000 patients found that in patients undergoing total hip arthroplasty, preoperative exercise and education led to significant reductions in pain, shorter lengths of stay postoperatively, and improvements in function.
- 3. Arthritis.** Studies have shown that therapeutic exercise programs can reduce pain and improve physical function among individuals with hip and knee osteoarthritis."

With physical therapy treatments, pain no longer has to control your life. Instead of opting for potentially harmful drugs, give Orthopedic Physical Therapy, Inc. a call. Our dedicated physical therapists will provide you with the necessary treatment for getting you back to your normal life - so you can say goodbye to your pain. **Get to the CAUSE of your problem for the SOURCE of your pain to be treated, not the symptoms.**

Source: <https://www.apta.org/uploadedFiles/APTAorg/Advocacy/Federal/Legislative-Issues/Opioid/APTAOpioidWhitePaper.pdf>

**Why Physical Therapy
Over Opioids**

**Do I Have To Be
Inactive When I'm In
Pain?**

**Patient Success
Spotlight**

GET MOVING WITH PICKLEBALL!

Exercise is a great way to combat pain and keep your body performing at its highest levels of physical function. If you are looking for a fun way to get moving and/or stay active, try pickleball! With over 2.8 million players, pickleball is becoming one of the fastest-growing sports in the United States.

Never heard of pickleball? Don't worry! Trying out a new sport is an exciting way to adopt a new hobby while also keeping your body limber. Pickleball is straightforward and easy to play – making it perfect for those who may have a more sedentary lifestyle or who may be living with an uncomfortable condition.

As an added bonus, there is very little risk of sustaining an injury with pickleball. Pickleball is played on a court, similar to that of a badminton. A pickleball is also similar to a tennis ball, but much lighter. It is commonly described as being somewhat of a mix between tennis, badminton, and table tennis. When playing, the pickleball is served underhand and batted back. Because of the simplicity of the game, the lightweight nature of the ball, and the ease of the throw, this game is perfect for people of all ages and physical abilities.

Need a break? No problem! The average length of a pickleball game is only 12 minutes – meaning you can get your exercise in and then relax between games.

There are a lot of added health benefits to playing pickleball, as well. It is an aerobic activity that promotes cardiovascular health, thus decreasing the risk of sustaining a heart attack. Due to the low-impact nature of the sport, it can also help improve one's balance and mental health, as it is less competitive and more social.

Additionally, pickleball can boost one's energy, burn calories, and improve muscle strength. Those who are involved in local pickleball teams report



a strong sense of comradery and friendliness associated with the game. If you are looking for a great way to get moving, improve your health, and meet new people, pickleball is the game for you! **Find local teams near you here:**

- www.places2play.org
- www.Virginiapickleball.org
- www.chesterfieldpickleball.club

At Orthopedic Physical Therapy, Inc. we want to help you stay active while also having fun. Pickleball is a great way to do exactly that! For more information on how to get started or additional tips on how you can increase your physical activity, don't hesitate to contact us today. We'll help you get back in the game.

Sources: <https://www.usapa.org/>
https://facty.com/network/answers/things/what-is-pickleball/?style=quick&utm_source=adwords&utm_medium=t-search&utm_term=%2Bpickleball&utm_campaign=FA-USA_-_Search_-_what_is_pickleball_-_Tablet&gclid=CjwKCAjwq4fsBRBnEiwANTahcEMxKnQ1TR4M2wq8fbm6yWHYEGS3DqL7PHGQr5hSp608EEe2qcWO4hoC438QAvD_BwE

Orthopedic Physical Therapy, Inc. Is A Direct Access Facility!



In the state of Virginia, patients have the right to see a physical therapist without a physician referral. You may be evaluated and treated for no more than 30 consecutive days, at which time a referral will be necessary. This allows you as the patient to see a physical therapist first.

Physical therapists are trained to evaluate and treat, as well as refer to an appropriate medical professional for issues that are outside of our scope of practice. If you would like to schedule an evaluation with one of our physical therapists please call our office for additional details (804) 285-0148.

You are the most important member of you own health care team, and you are entitled to choose the most appropriate health care professional to meet you goals.

Phone: 804.285.0148

Fax: 804.673.6026

For more information go to orthopedicptinc.com



PATIENT SUCCESS SPOTLIGHT



After one month I felt like a different person!

"I have had chronic body pain from Fibromyalgia, migraines, arthritis and other medical issues for many years. I have tried regular medical and therapy treatments with no help at all. Then I was referred to Tracey Adler at Orthopedic Physical Therapy. After one treatment, it was amazing - the pain that left my body. With dry needling and physical therapy, after one month I felt like a different person and can function better. The pain has decreased dramatically. I've been given a new lease on life and can't thank Tracey enough." - **Maureen**

ORTHOPEDICPTINC.COM

Think PT FIRST



Why You Need To Come In For A Check-Up:

- ✓ Move without pain
- ✓ Bend and move freely
- ✓ Balance confidently & securely
- ✓ Sit for long periods comfortably
- ✓ Walk for long distances
- ✓ Live an active & healthy lifestyle

Take Care Of Your Aches & Pains Before It's Too Late!

ORTHOPEDICPTINC.COM

"Do I Have To Be Inactive When I'm In Pain?"

Exercise & Pain Relief

If you have back or joint pain, there are probably some times when all you want to do is lie in bed all day. It's tempting, but it might make the problem worse. Doctors used to prescribe bed rest for back pain and other chronic pain conditions, but studies have found that people who exercise and stay flexible manage their pain much better than those who don't.

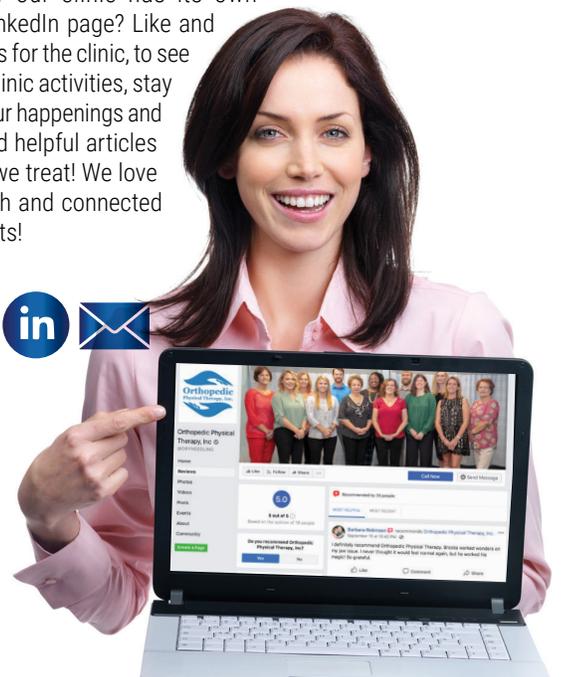
If you do have a chronic pain condition like back pain or hip, knee, or shoulder problems, you shouldn't begin an exercise program without guidance. Check with your physical therapist first. They have the expertise to help you develop an individualized exercise program. Have a professional; a physical therapist show you what is appropriate to do given your condition.

Here are 7 exercises/activities you should do to alleviate pain:

1. Walking
2. Swimming
3. Yoga
4. Tai Chi
5. Pilates
6. Stretching
7. Aerobics

FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Did you know our clinic has its own Facebook & LinkedIn page? Like and follow the pages for the clinic, to see fun photos of clinic activities, stay up-to-date on our happenings and events, and find helpful articles on conditions we treat! We love staying in touch and connected with our patients!





Our Specialties

- Trigger Point Dry Needling
- Chronic Pain
- Neck & Back Pain
- TMJ/TMD
- Headache Relief
- Fibromyalgia
- Myofascial & Referred Pain
- Women's Pelvic Pain
- Men's Health Issues
- Posture & Orthotics
- Hypermobility & EDS
- Sports Injuries

orthopedicptinc.com

Do you find yourself struggling to remain active after following these tips? Contact us today at 804.285.0148 to schedule an appointment!

Orthopedic Physical Therapy, Inc. *Staff Spotlight*

Kiara Girkins **PT, DPT**

Kiara Girkins, PT, DPT, received her B.S.B.A. from Christopher Newport University in 2006 before attending Virginia Commonwealth University to complete the prerequisites for PT school in 2015. Dr. Girkins received her Doctorate of Physical Therapy from the University of Lynchburg (formerly Lynchburg College) in 2018 and was the recipient of the program's 7 C.O.R.E. Values Award of Excellence. Dr. Girkins has a special interest in working with patients with spine and pelvic musculoskeletal dysfunction. She strongly believes in patient centered treatment that effectively blends manual therapy techniques with targeted exercise. Dr. Girkins is Direct Access Certified. A former competitive soccer player and dancer, Dr. Girkins continues to stay active and outdoors as much as possible as an avid hiker and runner.

Phone: 804.285.0148

Fax: 804.673.6026

ORTHOPEDICPTINC.COM



Why Choose Physical Therapy Over Opioids

5 Important Reasons To Choose PT FIRST Over Opioids

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), sales of prescription opioids have quadrupled in the United States, even though "there has not been an overall change in the amount of pain that Americans report."

You should choose physical therapy FIRST when:

1. The risks of opioid use outweigh the

rewards. Potential side effects of opioids include depression, overdose, and addiction, plus withdrawal symptoms when stopping opioid use. Because of these risks, "experts agreed that opioids should not be considered first-line or routine therapy for chronic pain," the CDC guidelines state.

2. You want to do more than mask the pain. Opioids reduce the sensation of pain by interrupting pain signals to the brain. Opioids make it so you can't feel the pain, but, they do not treat the source of your pain. Physical therapists treat pain by finding the source and restoring movement and function.

3. Pain or function problems are related to low back pain, hip or knee osteoarthritis, or fibromyalgia. The CDC cites "high-quality evidence" supporting exercise as part of a physical therapy treatment plan for those familiar conditions.

4. Opioids are prescribed for pain. Even in situations when opioids are prescribed, the CDC recommends that patients should receive "the lowest effective dosage," and opioids "should be combined" with nonopioid therapies, such as physical therapy.



5. Pain lasts 90 days. At this point, the pain is considered "chronic," and the risks for continued opioid use increase. An estimated 116 million Americans have chronic pain each year. The CDC guidelines note that nonopioid therapies are "preferred" for chronic pain and that clinicians should consider opioid therapy only if expected benefits for both pain and function are anticipated to outweigh risks to the patient.

"Physical Therapy vs Opioids: When to Choose Physical Therapy for Pain Management." American Physical Therapy Association. N.p., 15 June 2016. Web. 10 Feb. 2017.

ORTHOPEDICPTINC.COM

WE STRIVE TO PROVIDE THE BEST SERVICE TO OUR PATIENTS



Our Physical Therapists Are Trained To Find & Treat The Source Of Pain!

Orthopedic Physical Therapy, Inc. is a unique physical therapy facility in Richmond, VA. Our physical therapists provide care to people with musculoskeletal injuries who strive to return to work, sports, and/or an active, full lifestyle. Our physical therapists are trained to evaluate and treat the source of pain rather than simply treat symptoms. We look at your muscles, joints and entire body as a whole unit. Our clinicians work in tandem with patients to set and reach goals by using innovative strategies, such as dry needling in order to help them attain their highest level of wellness.

Each of our clinicians has undergone extensive training in treating musculoskeletal problems. Our physical therapists also have their own specialties. We work as a team to optimize your treatments and progress. - **Tracey Adler, PT, DPT, OCS, CMTPT**

