

# Guide for BC Family Physicians for referring patients with osteoarthritis arthritis (OA) to physiotherapy (PT)

Is PT indicated?

- What are the indications for PT in OA?**
- New OA diagnosis in ≥ 1 joint (hip, knee, hand, spine)
  - Pain/stiffness/swelling/joint damage substantially affecting daily physical functioning/mobility
  - Needs PT guidance and support for appropriate physical activity participation
  - Moderate to high fall or fracture risk
  - Lower limb OA with Body Mass Index (BMI) ≥ 25 kg/m<sup>2</sup>

- IF PT not indicated:**
- Promote physical activity participation
- ❖ Patient resources ([bcphysio\\_pdf1](#))
  - ❖ Physician resources ([www.exerciseismedicine.org](http://www.exerciseismedicine.org))
- Monitor & consider future referral

Is specialized 'Arthritis' PT indicated?

- IF PT : When is 'Arthritis' PT indicated in OA?**
- Acute injury/flare of OA joint(s)
  - Advanced joint damage
  - Acute post-surgical (within 3 months)



**'Arthritis' PT Indicated**

**'Arthritis' PT not indicated OR not available**

How will PT be funded?

**Public Funding**

**Private Insurance / Self-Pay**

**Private Insurance / Self-Pay**

- Mary Pack arthritis programs ([bcphysio\\_pdf2](#))
- Hospital-based arthritis programs ([bcphysio\\_pdf3](#))

Private PT with additional arthritis training ([bcphysio\\_pdf4](#))

- Private PT ([bcphysio\\_find](#))
- Click on 'Find a Physio' tab
- Search area(s) of expertise
- Arthritis or Rheumatology
  - Hand or CHT (if hands are primary complaint)

How to refer to PT?