

The Initial Evaluation with a CMA Therapist

CMA understands that not everyone has experienced physical therapy before, and we further understand that not all Physical Therapy is the same. Even if you have had treatment elsewhere before, your experience with **CMA** will be a new experience. Many patient's positively say, "Why didn't they (other facilities) do this with me before?"

To better understand the initial evaluation, the beginning of your experience with us, we want you to know what to expect. Generally speaking, the examination will take approximately **15-45** minutes and will cost around **\$40 - \$160**. And this is what you get:

1. Pre-Exam Questionnaire

This is a form that gives the Physical Therapist important information about your pain or problem to help better determine the potential structures involved and to develop a sound and efficient exam. Please complete this thoroughly.



2. Subjective Exam

The Physical Therapist will dialogue with you even further to get straight to the source of your problem. Some of the topics covered may be:

- a. Past Medical History (PMH) and/or medications
- b. Description of the pain and problem
- c. Mechanism (cause) of the injury
- d. Aggravating factors (what effects it and makes it worse)
- e. Easing factors (what makes it better)

This is a good time to tell your CMA Therapist anything you may think is important or relevant to your pain or problem.

3. Objective Testing (Hands-On)

Once the Physical Therapist has a good "picture" of your pain and the understanding of potential causes and sources, he or she will begin the process of "verifying" the exact structures involved. Some of the procedures may include:



- a. **Disrobing:** Typically the therapist will need to check for possible swelling, discoloration, or deformity so you may be asked to expose the affected area(s). We ask that you wear loose clothing which allows easy access to the affected area, however, we supply gowns for your convenience as well.
- b. **Active Movement:** To check for weakness, compensation, or disease, the therapist may ask you to perform movements such as bending, twisting, lifting, climbing etc.
- c. **Mobilization:** To check for any potential loss of integrity, the therapist may move certain joints, tendons, or ligaments while you are in a relaxed position.
- d. **Pressure:** To check for potential tears or dysfunction of tissues, the therapist may put forceful pressure on certain muscles, bones, or tendons.

The physical therapist is a highly trained medical professional and will not harm you in any way. It is common, however, to experience an increase in pain or soreness after your examination for up to 48-72 hours. This is necessary in order to properly assess the structures involved and to come to an exact conclusion. Make sure to call us if the increased pain lasts MORE than 72 hours.

4. Explanation (on the exact cause of pain)

All the testing won't be for nothing. Once completed, the Physical Therapist will have a good picture of exactly what's wrong and he or she will make sure you know and understand it also. This is a good time to ask any questions to get a clear picture.

5. Precautions

Now you are on the road to success. There are four stages to your rehabilitative program. We call it the C-A-I-R™ steps. They are:

- C. Controlling destructive forces
- A. Applying appropriate forces
 - I. Imposing challenging forces
- R. Restoring "everyday" functional forces



The goal of most rehabilitation programs is to restore you to the prior functional level you were before pain or injury. **CMA** attempts to bring you to a HIGHER LEVEL than you were before the pain began. The **CMA** Therapist will explain to you each step at the time of exam, however, let's go over the first one now.

"Controlling destructive forces". Your success starts with your ability to remove destructive forces from the affected structures by modifying your daily or work activities, or habitual movement patterns. The injured tissues need a good environment free of harm in order to maximally heal. This step is **so** important that your success literally **depends on** it. For example, let's say you have lower back pain and the Physical Therapist determines that the main cause of your problem is too much pressure on to your discs (shock absorbers in your spine), and the cause of that excessive pressure is from too much sitting. If you are not able to limit your sit time or take frequent breaks by getting out of that position regularly, the chances of you getting better is slim. After each therapy session you may "feel" better but since the destructive forces aren't able to be removed the pain will typically come right back.

In the above scenario, therapy acts sort of as a band aid—we put it on your injury, but you rub it right off again by imposing destructive forces. Experience tells us there is not much success in this. In the event you are not able to participate and complete the very first step of the program, the Physical Therapist may design only a home and self care program for you to follow until you can.

6. Goals

If you are able to participate in the rehabilitative program there are certain goals we want to define and achieve. They are usually and simply YOUR wants and wishes. What do you hope to gain by being in physical therapy? To walk better? Be able to reach overhead better? Sleep without pain again? Etc.



7. Treatment Plan

The Physical Therapist will design a treatment plan geared to help you reach your goals. There are a variety of treatments available to you at **CMA** and the Physical Therapist will choose the ones most appropriate for you. You may have been told by others that you "need" certain things but the Physical Therapist truly understands your needs and has your goals in mind and will choose only those things he or she knows will bring you long-term success.



Here is a list of just some of our special treatments available:

- a. Pressure-Point Release
- b. Contract-Relax Stretching
- c. Joint mobilization
- d. Soft-tissue mobilization



- e. Hands-Free Ultrasound
- f. Biomechanical Correction
- g.
- h. Strengthening
- i. Electrical Muscle Stimulation
- j. Formed Cryotherapy

Ask your therapist for more information on any one of these treatments.

Typically, you won't receive any treatment on your initial visit because the therapist has not had time to design one yet however, if time permits the Physical Therapist may initiate a short treatment to minimize any discomforts caused by the exam.

8. Report to Referring Physician

Although your time with the Physical Therapist may be concluded, the Physical Therapist is not done. Typically, your referring physician or insurance company requests a written report detailing the results of the examination and in order to be accurate and thorough it may take the Physical Therapist up to 30 more minutes to complete the process of handling your initial visit.



You may request a copy of this report at any time, however, an administrative fee may be applied.

We hope that this brief outline helps you better understand what to expect with your upcoming exam with CMA Physical Therapist. For any questions feel free to call us anytime at (860) 225-6666.

We look forward to seeing you soon!