

Occupational Therapy

Occupational therapy is a client-centred health profession concerned with promoting health and wellbeing through occupation. Occupational Therapy helps people of all ages who have physical, sensory, or cognitive problems. The primary goal of occupational therapy is to enable people to participate in the activities of everyday life.

Occupational therapists achieve this outcome by working with people and communities to enhance their ability to engage in the occupations they want to, need to, or are expected to do, or by modifying the occupation or the environment to better support their occupational engagement. Occupational therapists help with barriers that affect a person's emotional, social, and physical needs. To do this, they use everyday activities, exercises, and other therapies.

OT helps kids play, improves their school performance, and aids their daily activities. It also boosts their self-esteem and sense of accomplishment. With OT, kids can:

- Develop fine motor skills so they can grasp and release toys and develop good handwriting or computer skills.
- Improve eye–hand coordination so they can play and do needed school skills such as bat a ball and copy from a blackboard.
- Master basic life skills such as bathing, getting dressed, brushing teeth, and self-feeding.
- Learn positive behaviors and social skills by practicing how they manage frustration and anger.
- Get special equipment to help build their independence. These include wheelchairs, splints, bathing equipment, dressing devices, and communication aids.

Who Might Need Occupational Therapy?

OT can help kids and teens who have:

- Birth injuries or birth defects
- Sensory processing disorders
- Traumatic injuries to the brain or spinal cord
- Learning problems
- Autism
- Juvenile rheumatoid arthritis

- Mental health or behavioral problems
- Broken bones or other orthopedic injuries
- Developmental delays
- Post-surgical conditions
- Burns
- Spina bifida
- Traumatic amputations
- Cancer
- Severe hand injuries
- Multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, and other chronic illnesses

OT can help adults who have:

- Sensory processing disorders
- Traumatic injuries to the brain or spinal cord
- Mental health challenges
- Rheumatoid arthritis with hand function problems
- Neurological disorders e.g. Stroke, parkinson's disease

Where Do OTs Work?

Occupational therapists work in many different settings, including hospitals, schools, rehabilitation centres, mental health facilities, private practices and children's clinics.