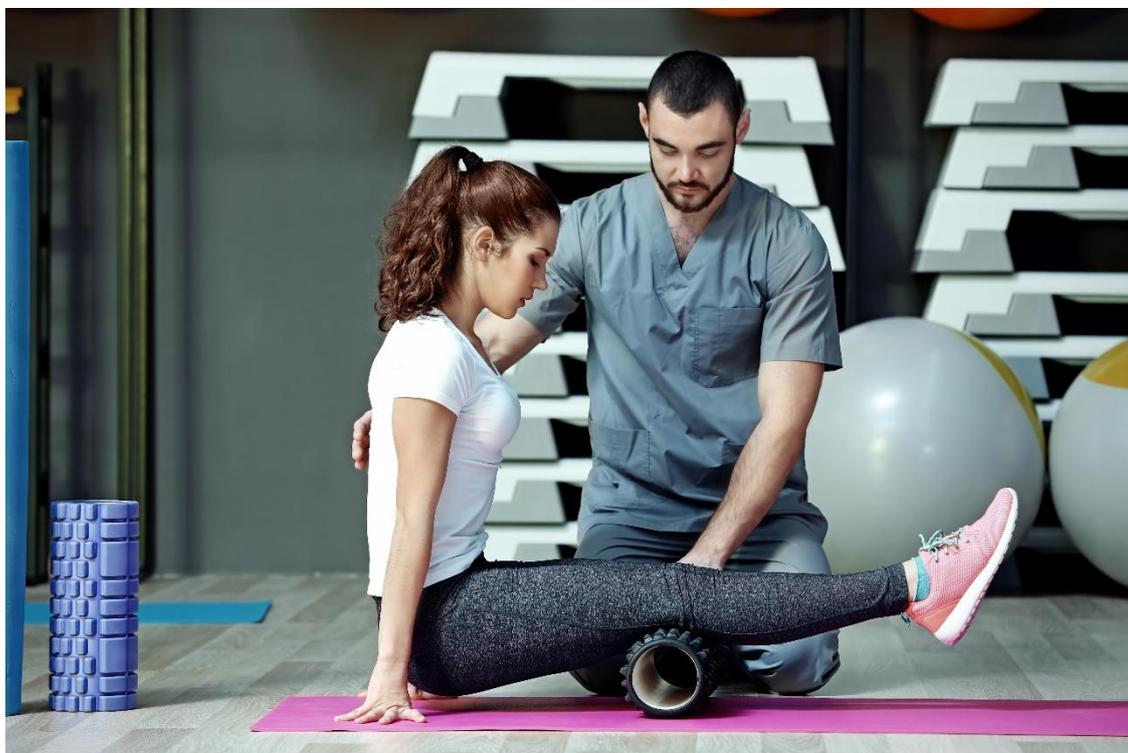


Press release

For immediate release

29 August 2018

Physical therapy can help improve mental health



Physical activity is good for the body but it can also help improve mental health and wellbeing. **Get active, stay active** is the key message from physical therapists for this year's [World Physical Therapy Day](#) on 8 September 2018.

Did you know?

- 1 in 4 people will experience a mental health issue of some sort during their lifetime
- 1 in 6 people are likely to have had mental health issues in the past seven days
- people with mental health issues are more at risk of having poor physical health
- 70% of premature deaths in people with mental health issues are due to poor physical health
- mental health issues are one of the main causes of the overall disease burden worldwide.

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Exercise is an evidence-based treatment for people with mental health issues, and physical therapists work with people who may have mental health issues alongside other long-term health issues.

WCPT President Emma K Stokes said: 'We all know how important physical activity and exercise is for our physical health – our fitness, flexibility, balance and strength. But being physically active can also help manage and improve our mental health and wellbeing.

'If you're feeling anxious or low it can be difficult to think about getting or staying active but a physical therapist can work with you to suggest activities or a programme that's right for you. They can make sure the targets you set are realistic and achievable, and they'll help keep you motivated and adapt your activities or programme as you progress.

'Getting and staying physically active will help improve both physical and mental health. Talk to a physical therapist and discover an exercise or activity you find enjoyable and have fun! That's what World Physical Therapy Day is all about.'

Every year individual physical therapists and WCPT member organisations celebrate their contribution to global health on [World Physical Therapy Day](#), organising events and using the #worldptday hashtag to share stories and experiences across the world. World Physical Therapy Day is aligned with a World Health Organization (WHO) action plan. The World Health Organization has two classifications for physical activity: moderate, such as brisk walking or cycling, and vigorous, such as running or fast swimming.

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EDITOR'S NOTES

About physical therapy

Physical therapists (also known as physiotherapists) are experts in developing and maintaining people's ability to move and function throughout their lives. With an advanced understanding of how the body moves and what keeps it from moving well, they promote wellness, mobility and independence. They treat and prevent many problems caused by pain, illness, disability and disease, sport and work related injuries, ageing and inactivity.

Physical therapists are educated over several years, giving them a full knowledge of the body's systems and the skills to treat a wide range of problems. This education is usually university-based, at a level that allows physical therapists to

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practise independently. Continuing education ensures that they keep up to date with the latest advances in research and practice. Many physical therapists are engaged in research themselves.

About World Physical Therapy Day

World Physical Therapy Day falls on 8th September every year, and is an opportunity for physical therapists from all over the world to raise awareness about their role in keeping people well, mobile and independent. The day was established by WCPT in 1996, and marks the date on which WCPT was founded in 1951.

About WCPT

WCPT is the profession's global body representing over 450,000 physical therapists/physiotherapists from member organisations in 112 countries. More information: www.wcpt.org.



**World Confederation
for Physical Therapy**