

Occupational Therapy Toolkit

Osteoarthritis

Functional Limitations:

ADL, IADL, work and leisure impairment

Functional mobility impairment

Limited ROM (typically seen in shoulder abduction and external rotation, elbow extension, forearm pronation and supination wrist flexion and extension, radial ulna deviation, and thumb and finger flexion and extension)

Impaired grip and pinch strength

Hand deformities due to osteophyte formation in the DIP called Heberden nodes and at the PIP called Bouchard nodes

Impaired strength

Limited activity tolerance and endurance

Joint pain, stiffness and inflammation that increase with activity

Impaired fine motor control

Impaired hand function

Fall risk

Knowledge deficit

Environmental barriers

Occupational Therapy Intervention:

ADL, IADL, work and leisure training including but not limited to...

Train in the use of adaptive equipment to

Improves grasp (built-ups)

Compensate for range of motion loss (dress stick)

Improves ease of performance (electric can opener)

Prevent stress on joints (lever door handle)

Prevent prolonged grasp (book holder, Dycem)

Compensate for weak/absent muscle (u-cuff, jar opener)

Prevent accidents (bath seat, nonskid rugs)

Education on energy conservation, joint protection with application to ADL's

Instruct in activity balancing

Functional mobility training.

Train in proper transfer techniques and bed mobility skills as they relate to ADL and IADL tasks

Instruct in safe walker use and transporting items (walker bag or tray)

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Provide UE, neck and trunk therapeutic activities and exercises to improve ROM and strength

Acute flare-ups - instruct in performing gentle range of motion exercises 3-4 times daily followed by icing for 15 minutes

For non acute joints - instruct in the use of superficial heat, gentle self stretching techniques and strengthening in pain free range

Provide splints to rest inflamed joints, maintain proper joint alignment, improve functional control and support weak or painful joints - resting hand splint, wrist cock-up, finger splints, ulnar deviation splint, tri-point proximal interphalangeal joint splint, and thumb spica splint

Instruct in pain management techniques

Teach stress management and relaxation techniques

Instruct in coordinating medication peak with exercise and activity

Educate in the use of superficial heat and cold

Assess home safety and functional safety and provide environmental modifications and adaptations

Educate regarding falls risk and prevention strategies

Patient Education:

1. Superficial Heat
2. Superficial Cold
3. Upper Body Active ROM Exercises for Arthritis
4. Deep Breathing Exercise
5. Splint Instructions
6. Joint Protection Principles
7. Energy Conservation Principles
8. Energy Conservation with Self Care Activities
9. Energy Conservation with Meal and Home Management
10. Stress Management and Relaxation Techniques
11. Falls Risks Assessment and Prevention Strategies
12. Home Safety and Functional Safety Assessment