

The Role of an Occupational Therapist

Occupational therapists (OTs) play a crucial role in upper limb amputation rehabilitation. Their primary goal is to help you regain independence and improve your quality of life. Here are some key aspects of their role:

Assessment and Evaluation: OTs conduct comprehensive assessments to understand your functional abilities, limitations, and goals. This helps tailor the therapy to your individual needs.

Activities of Daily Living (ADLs): They help you relearn how to perform daily tasks such as dressing, bathing, grooming, and meal preparation.

Preparatory Limb Care: They help control edema, maintain skin integrity, manage wounds and scars, and manage pain and sensitivity. Your OT may prescribe exercises for strengthening and balance if that is needed as well.

Prosthetic Training: OTs assist in learning how to use a prosthesis, including putting on and removing it, caring for the device, control training, and incorporating it into your daily activities.

Pain Management: OTs can assist in pain relief through a variety of treatment strategies. Your OT can help address residual limb pain, sound side pain, phantom limb pain, and sensitivity as part of a comprehensive pain management strategy with your other providers.

Instrumental ADLs: OTs support you in more complex tasks like driving, home management, and shopping.



Return to Work: Your OT can assess your responsibilities on the job to create a treatment plan to enable you to return to work if possible. They can make recommendations for modifications and help you regain the skills to do what you need.

Leisure and Social Participation: OTs work with you to engage in hobbies, sports, and social activities, promoting overall well-being.

Psychosocial Support: OTs provide emotional support and mental health strategies, helping you cope with the psychological impact of limb loss and adjust to life today.

Adaptive Equipment: OTs can provide recommendations for adaptive equipment and accommodations that can help increase independence and better perform the activities that you want and need to do.



For more information, scan the code
or visit [HangerClinic.com/ULResources](https://www.hangerclinic.com/ULResources).

 Hanger Clinic Upper Limb Prosthetic Specialty Network

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Injury Prevention: Because you might rely more heavily on other body parts and joints now, it is important for you to understand ergonomics and how to safely use your body to prevent overuse injuries in the future. OTs can provide suggestions on how to preserve the health of the rest of your body as you learn new strategies to perform activities.

CHOOSING AN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST

Your OT is an integral member of your care team. You will need a prescription from your physician to receive occupational therapy.

Consider asking your doctor or prosthetist for recommendations. You can also use online resources to find therapists in your area. Search for OTs that specialize in upper limb prosthetic training. Consider their location to ensure you are able to attend appointments.



You can search for an OT that specializes in upper limb prosthetic training; however, it is not common for an OT to have extensive training or experience in upper limb prostheses. Not to worry—we have a team at Hanger Clinic that can help train your OT on how to work with prostheses!

Once you have identified an OT, they will relay feedback to other members of your care team to best facilitate your rehabilitation process and help you achieve your goals.

Note: *In some areas, there are fewer OTs practicing, so we may recommend working with a physical therapist.*



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